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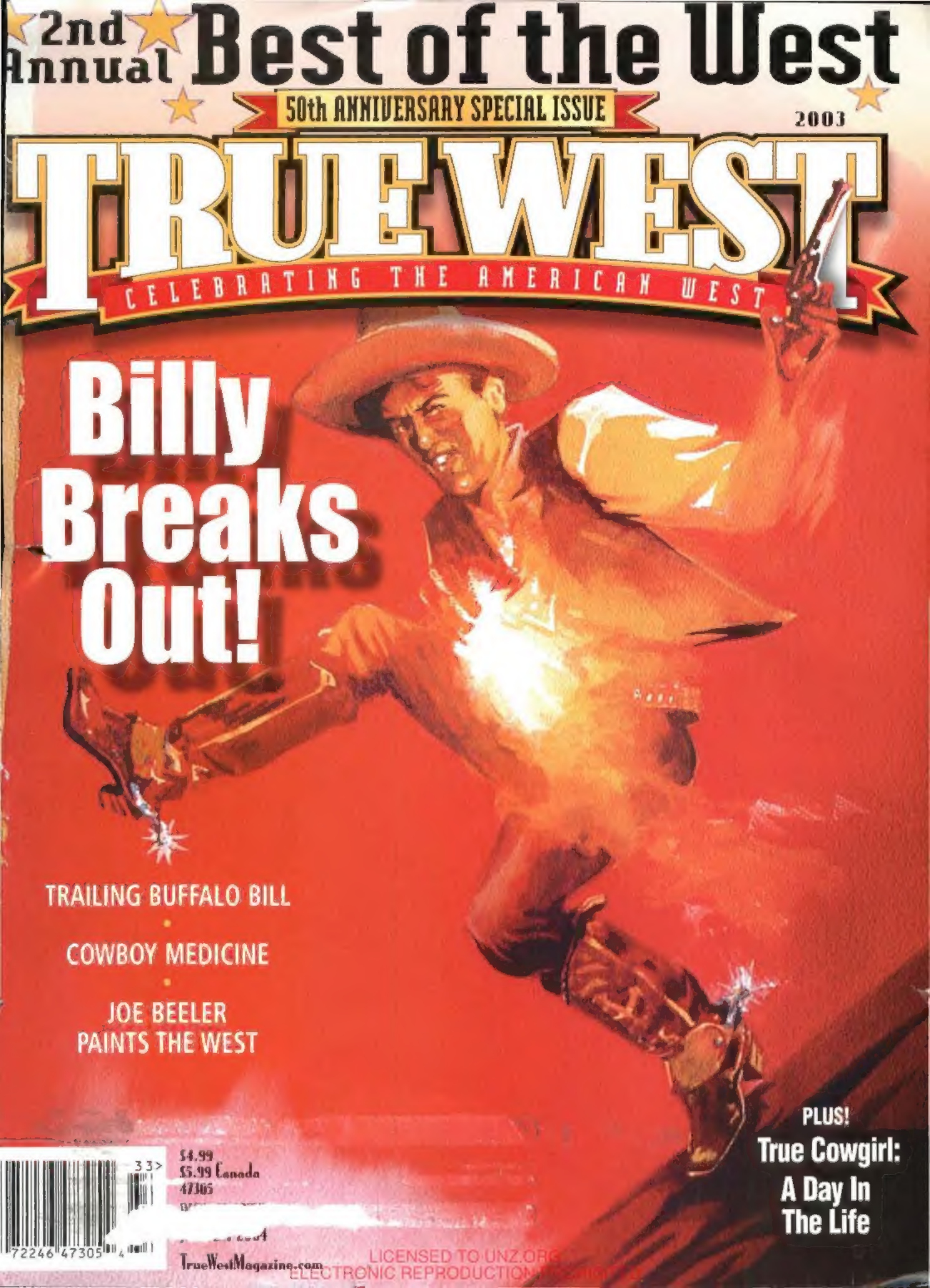

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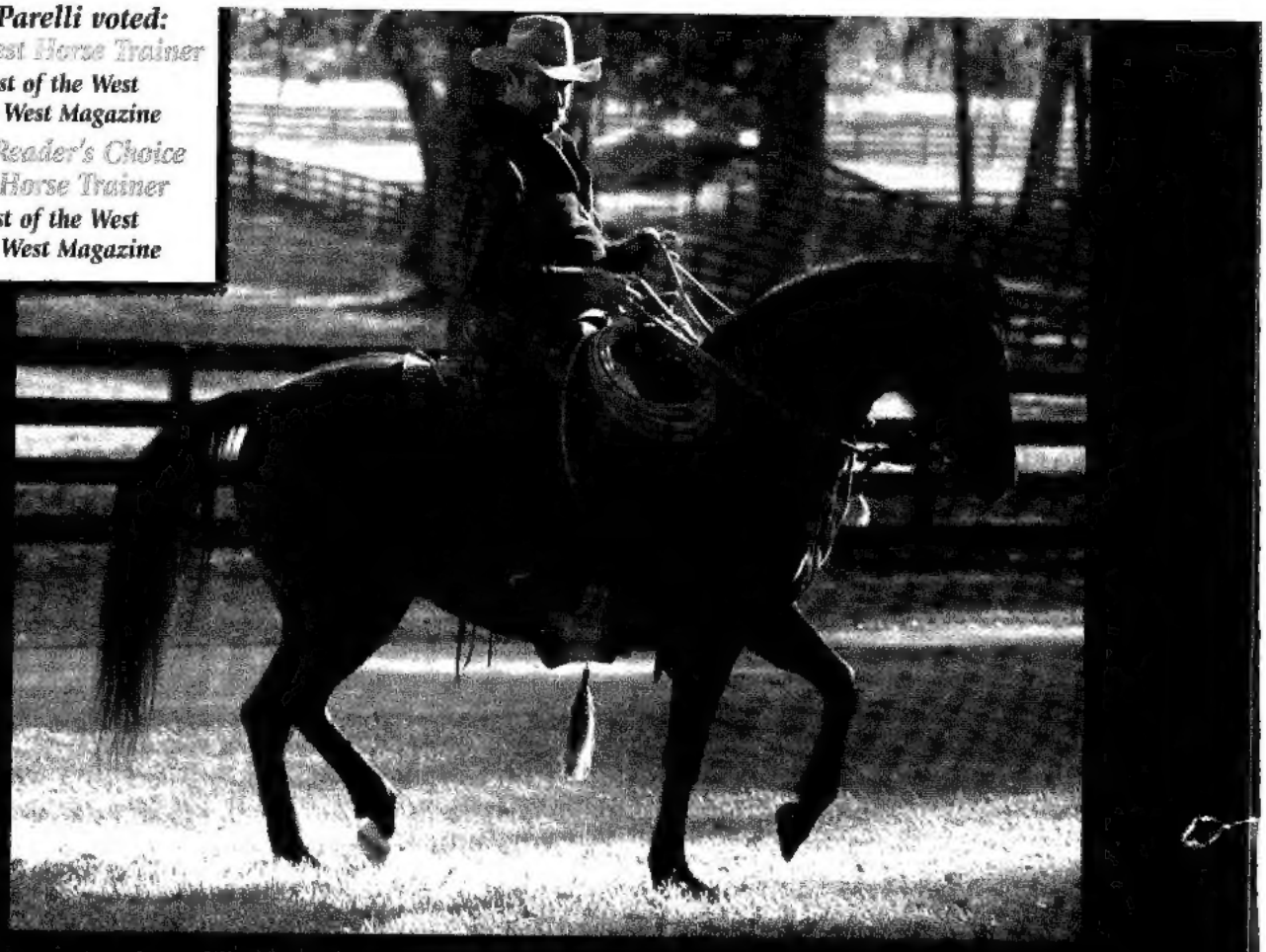

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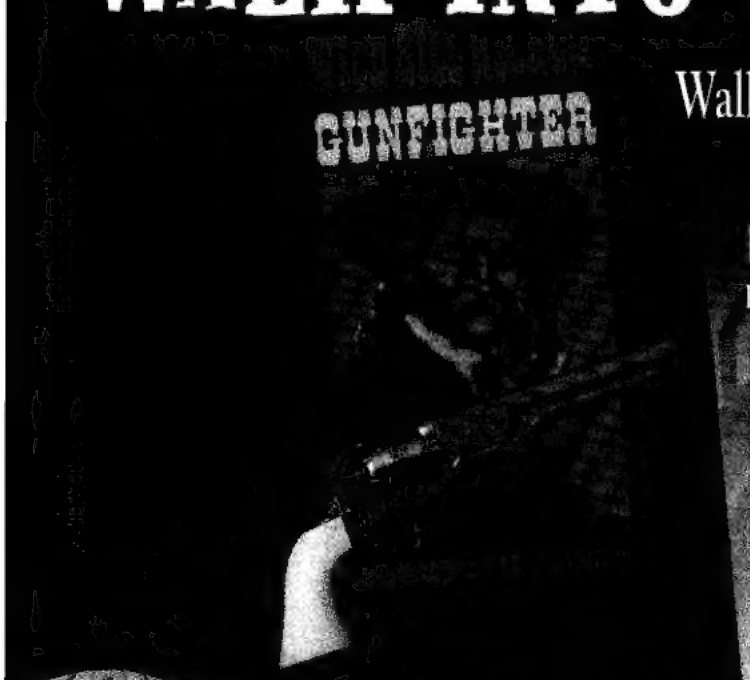

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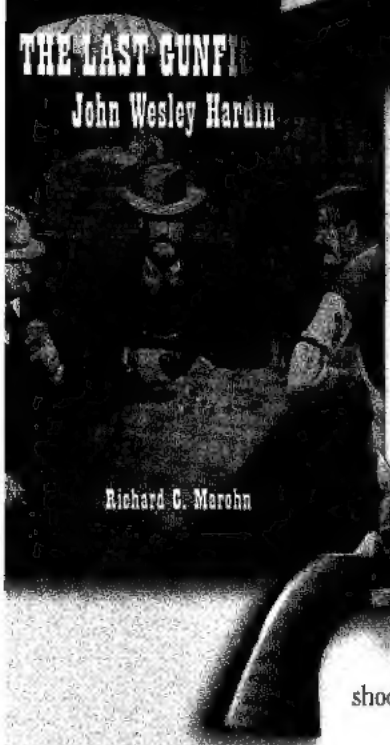

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By Richard Marohn

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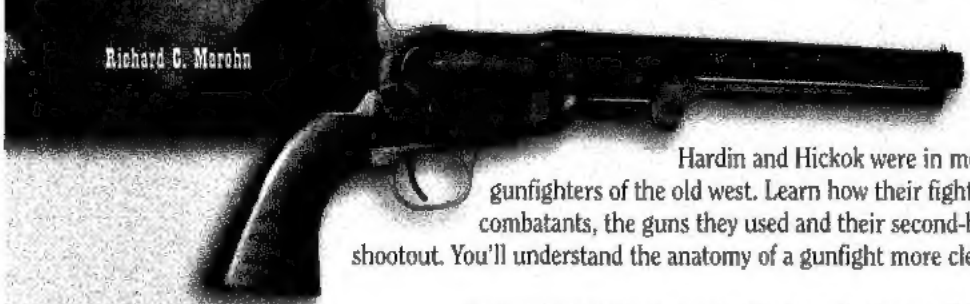

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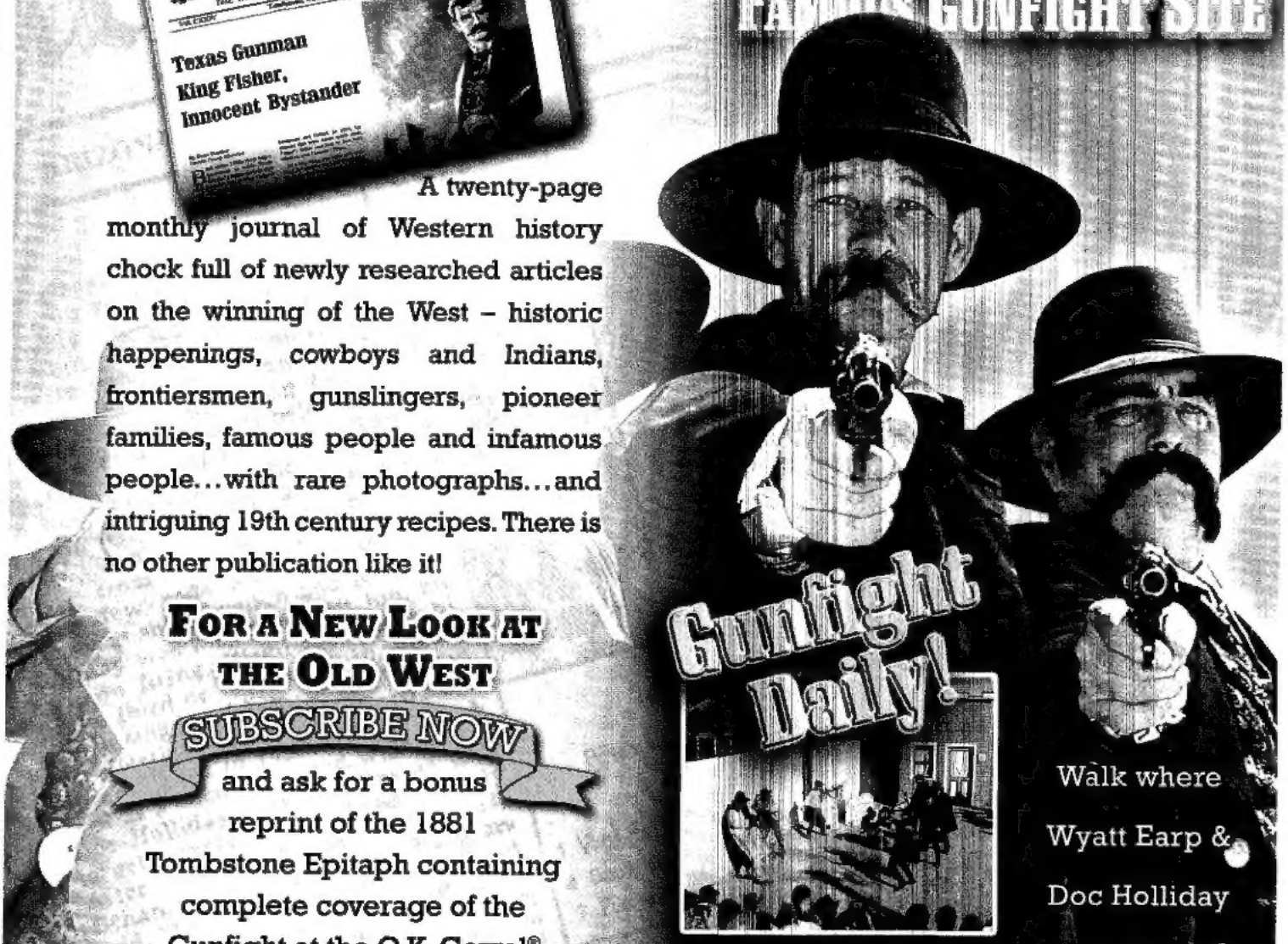

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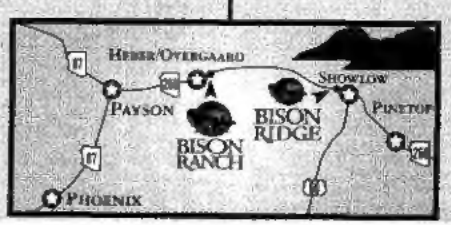

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Features

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22 Kid Dig Turns Nasty
Billy the Kid timeline. Also, Billy the Kid expert Frederick Nolan debates the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department about digging up Billy.
— *The Editors*

24 Vera Changes Rodeo Fashion
Vera McGinnis was the first woman to wear, and flaunt, pants in the rodeo ring.
— *Jana Bommersbach*

27 Second Annual Best of the West
From artists to artisans and movies to music, *True West* presents this year's "Best of the West."
— *The Editors*

60 From Sea to Shining Sea
Martha Summerhayes was one of many frontier army wives who helped build the West.
— *Cynthia A. Williams*

61 Custard's Last Stand
Before George Custer's massacre, Sgt. Amos Custard suffered a similar fate.
— *Robert Dalton*

62 A Bull Market
If you're looking for old-fashioned rodeo fun, here's the top 10 that fans shouldn't miss.
— *Johnny D. Boggs*

63 Is This a Real Execution?
Our photo experts appraise a reader's photos of a Mexican execution.
— *The Editors*

74 True Cowgirl
Stacy Halford may look like a model, but she's a true rodeo cowgirl.
— *Jana Bommersbach*

80 A Cowboy's Bitter Dose of the West
How did Old West pioneers cure what ails them?
— *Wayne Bethard*

96 Renegade Roads
When you trail Buffalo Bill, you're in for quite a trip.
— *Johnny D. Boggs*

105 Riding the Rails
Durango, Colorado, may be out of the way, but the train ride alone is worth the trip.
— *Johnny D. Boggs*

110 From Church Dreamer to Western Novelist
Jon Chandler's creative spark first hit him in a church pew.
— *Candy Moulton*

116 Gettin' Off that LA Freeway
It may be hard to believe, but country-rock king Jerry Jeff Walker has a new jazzy sound.
— *Corinne Brown*

DEPARTMENTS ON PAGE 8

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Departments

10 To the Point
Executive Editor Bob Boze Bell's editorial on our second annual "Best of the West" issue.

12 Shooting Back
Letters to the Editor.

14 Western Roundup
A calendar of Western events. This issue spotlights the Glorious Treasures exhibit at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles, California.

16 Collecting the West
Wild Bill Hickok dominates a Greg Martin auction.

19 Shooting from the Hip
Phil Spangenberger's arsenal of Old West gun facts may surprise even the most knowledgeable expert.

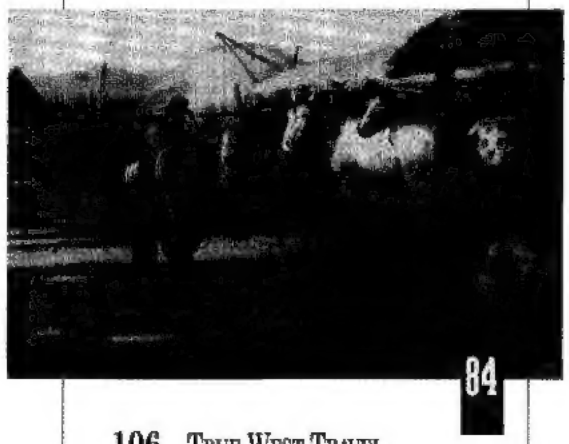
64 Classic Gunfights
Billy the Kid escapes during the McSween house battle.

70 Westerns
An interview with Peter Fonda about the rerelease of *The Hired Hand*.

84 Art of the True West
As one of the founders of the Cowboy Artists of America, Joe Beeler still makes magic in his portrayals of the Old West.

88 Outfitting the West
Chaps—the next rage in Western fashion.

92 Exhibiting the West
The Autry Museum of Western Heritage is a window into the West.



106 True West Travel
Where to play and stay in the West.

112 Western Book Reviews

118 True Music Reviews

121 Trading Post Profiles
A close-up look at the folks who keep the West alive.

122 Trading Post
A Western emporium.

132 Ask the Marshall
True West's answer man.

134 Classifieds

136 Last Stand
"Historical Twins" and "The Bull Pen" sports quiz.

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An Exclusive Tribute Authorized By The Wayne Family

The John Wayne Coach Gun

John Wayne was a man we will always remember with fondness and respect. More than anyone else in recent times, he represented the best of the American spirit. He spoke to us with honesty and authority and never compromised his principles. And even in our worst moments of national self-doubt, he showed us what it meant to be a real American and be proud of it.

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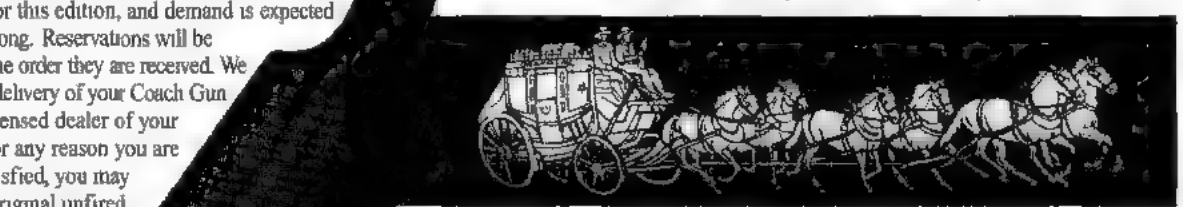

JOHN WAYNE COACH GUN

On the right-side of the barrel, a stagecoach with a six up team of horses at full gallop is featured in lustrous 24-karat gold, along with the title of the Tribute, "John Wayne Coach Gun," also in 24-karat gold.

Left side of barrel features one of John Wayne's principles of life, "I won't be wronged, I won't be insulted," along with a depiction of John Wayne's distinctive signature, both in 24-karat gold

A classic portrait of John Wayne is laser-carved on the buttstock. Note the detail in the design.

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Our annual *Best of the West* awards turn two this issue. We especially had fun trying to expand our scope on all things Western and excellent (p. 27).

Speaking of which, while we don't have a category for Drunkest Performance by a Country Rock Legend, if we did, I would have to nominate **Jerry Jeff Walker** (Celebrity Theatre's revolving stage, Phoenix, Arizona, c. 1977). The guy was flat-out bombed. True, this was back when being high was part of the deal. (In fact, Tombstone's slogan: "The Town too Tough to Die" was adopted and modified by counter-culture Bisbee to: "The Town too High to Care.") But that was a long time ago. **Corinne Brown** caught up with a very sober Jerry Jeff (p. 116). Music profiles and reviews (p. 118) are part of our new *True Music* coverage. "Real people playing real music," is how the **Twangcast.com** folks put it. Well put.

■ **Jana Bommersbach** continues the **Vera McGinnis** story (p. 24) with a feature on the cowgirl's influence in rodeo fashion.

■ The Billy dig turns nasty as three friends of ours—**Fred Nolan**, **Tom Sullivan** and **Steve Sederwall**—face off on Lincoln County's attempt to answer once and for all, was **Brushy Bill** really **Billy the Kid**? (p. 23)

■ Our staff photographer **John Beckett** caught up with cowgirl **Stacy Hatford** (no, that's too strong; he *tried* to catch up with her) and the result is an old-time *Life* magazine-style spread that we call "True Cowgirl" (p. 74).

■ I met **Jon Chandler** in Gunnison, Colorado, at last year's writer's conference. In addition to having the best pipes in a tristate area (he's an excellent crooner), Jon is also an accomplished writer (p. 110).

■ **Buffalo Bill** was known to break a trail or two, so it's a tad ironic to be trailing him, but it's a trip well-worth the effort (p. 96)

■ My family first pulled into Durango, Colorado, in the late 1950s when we discovered a shortcut out of the Arizona heat on our way to the family farm in Iowa. (Would that make the road a cold cut?) The town still has plenty of Western magic (p. 105).

"History is the devil's scripture."
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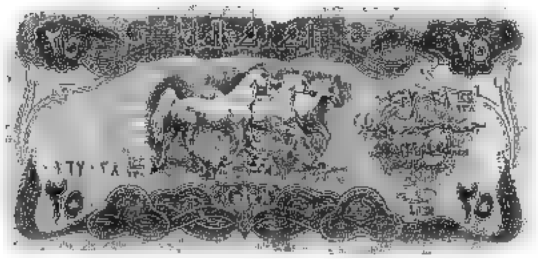
Shooting Back

True West readers speak out



Johnnie's gift: 25 Dinars from the Central Bank of Iraq.

– Courtesy Johnnie Martinez –

You don't know me but I'm here in Iraq right now. I read your magazine on who really killed Custer (May/June 2003). Here in Iraq, it's hot as hell. Sometimes we break 130 degrees. We drink a lot of water, and yes, there are camels here. But we'll go home sooner or later. Here's a little gift from me.

Johnnie Martinez
U.S. soldier, now deployed in Iraq

John Other Day-Not so Docile

I've researched the Minnesota [Sioux] uprising for years and just read "If they're hungry, let them eat grass" (May/June 2003). Little Crow didn't just flee to Canada; he petitioned the Hudson's Bay Company for use of a cannon to reattack the U.S. Army. John Other Day may have been a Christian Indian, but he was far from docile. Cut Nose, one of the Indians who was executed, had years before received his name after his nose was bitten off by John Other Day.

Collin McDonald
San Marcos, CA

Yes, He Did

James Marshall didn't discover the gold nugget at Sutter's Mill. He did take the nugget to Sutter. The person who found the nugget in the mill was a young man named Wimmer, son of the cook and mill foreman. The nugget is now in the Smithsonian and is called the Wimmer Nugget.

Tombstone

Phil Bartlett
Fremont, CA

David Shayt of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History: *The Wimmer Nugget is located in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley. The Smithsonian has a nugget that is acknowledged to be the first piece of gold found by James Marshall at the site. Records show Marshall took the nugget to John Sutter, who took it to Army Quartermaster Capt. Joseph L. Folsom, who took it to Lt. Loeser, who then escorted it to Washington D.C. in the fall of 1848. Pres. Polk then presented the nugget as proof that gold had been discovered in California. Sutter quotes Marshall saying that as he looked into the river "...another glittering morsel caught my eye...to my astonishment found that it was a thin scale of what appears to be pure gold." Marshall's description characterizes the Smithsonian piece of gold, not Wimmer's large, rounded nugget.*

O.K. Corral Movies-Hit or Miss

I really enjoyed Bruce Dettman's article on the O.K. Corral movies (*Westerns*, July 2003). One interesting fact—in the 1993 movie *Tombstone*, during the O.K. Corral shoot-out, Holliday (Val Kilmer) fires three times from a double-barrel shotgun without reloading. Quite a feat!

Bob James
The Woodlands, TX

In his article "O.K. Corral Movies," Bruce Dettman calls *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* (1957) dumb. I couldn't agree . . . less! Better than just OK, *Gunfight* is a good Hollywood Western. It features a stable full of stars, good direction, excellent action, Oscar-nominated editing, terrific music score by Dmitri Tiomkin and a catchy title song sung by Frankie Laine. *Gunfight* may appear dated by modern movie standards, but it is not a film to be scoffed at.

Phil Holabach
Broken Arrow, OK

Humanizing Wyatt

Wyatt Earp

Since when is telling the truth "legend wrecking"? Wyatt Earp was a lawman for only five percent of his life. The rest of his life, he was a gambler, saloon keeper and apparently pimped women to boot. Does that wreck his legend? No. To me, it makes his complexity more interesting and makes him more human and believable.

Richard Jensen
Foley, AL

Mr Barra tried his best to admirably defend Wyatt Earp's reputation (July 2003). However, I'm intrigued by Mr. Barra's comment, "I don't think that [Earp] spent much time in Peoria." Perhaps some definitive reasoning for that belief should have been included.

Jim Groom
Grass Valley, CA

Allen Barra's response: *Adelia Earp's memoir places Wyatt and Morgan in Missouri in June of 1872, which, if correct, means they left Peoria for at least a couple of months. In any event, in January of 1874 Wyatt was known to be in Wichita, and may have been there as late as the fall of '73. No records yet found place him in Peoria in 1873. Besides,*

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Take *True West's* Historically Accurate Western Movie Quiz at www.truewestmagazine.com

Wyatt Earp never stayed in one place for long.

Pancho's Favorite Horse?

This issue is great (Aug/Sept 2003). I've especially always loved Pancho Villa. I used to have a photograph of him atop the mount you usually see him on and the caption read: Pancho atop his favorite horse _____. Now it's driving me nuts trying to remember what his horse's name was. Do you know what it was? I was gonna name my next horse after Pancho's, but I need the name. Right now, I got a horse with no name except horse.

BILLY BOB SHAMHART
APACHE JUNCTION, AZ

Pancho Villa's favorite horse was Seven Leagues (Siete Leguas).

Corrections

- *The photo of Wyatt in Lamar (p. 30, July 2003) is a tintype, so the image should have been reversed.*

- *Ethel Bishop is no longer a potential candidate for being Ethel Place (p. 37, Aug/Sept 2003). Historian Donna Ernst has discovered Bishop married in Fort Worth, Texas, while Ethel Place was in Argentina.*

The photo of Will Carver (p. 53, Aug/Sept 2003) is actually of Tod Carver, an unrelated outlaw.

We Welcome Your Comments

"Now let the letters roll in and bare your very soul. That is what has always kept us going and I think it always will." —Joe Small, True West founder.

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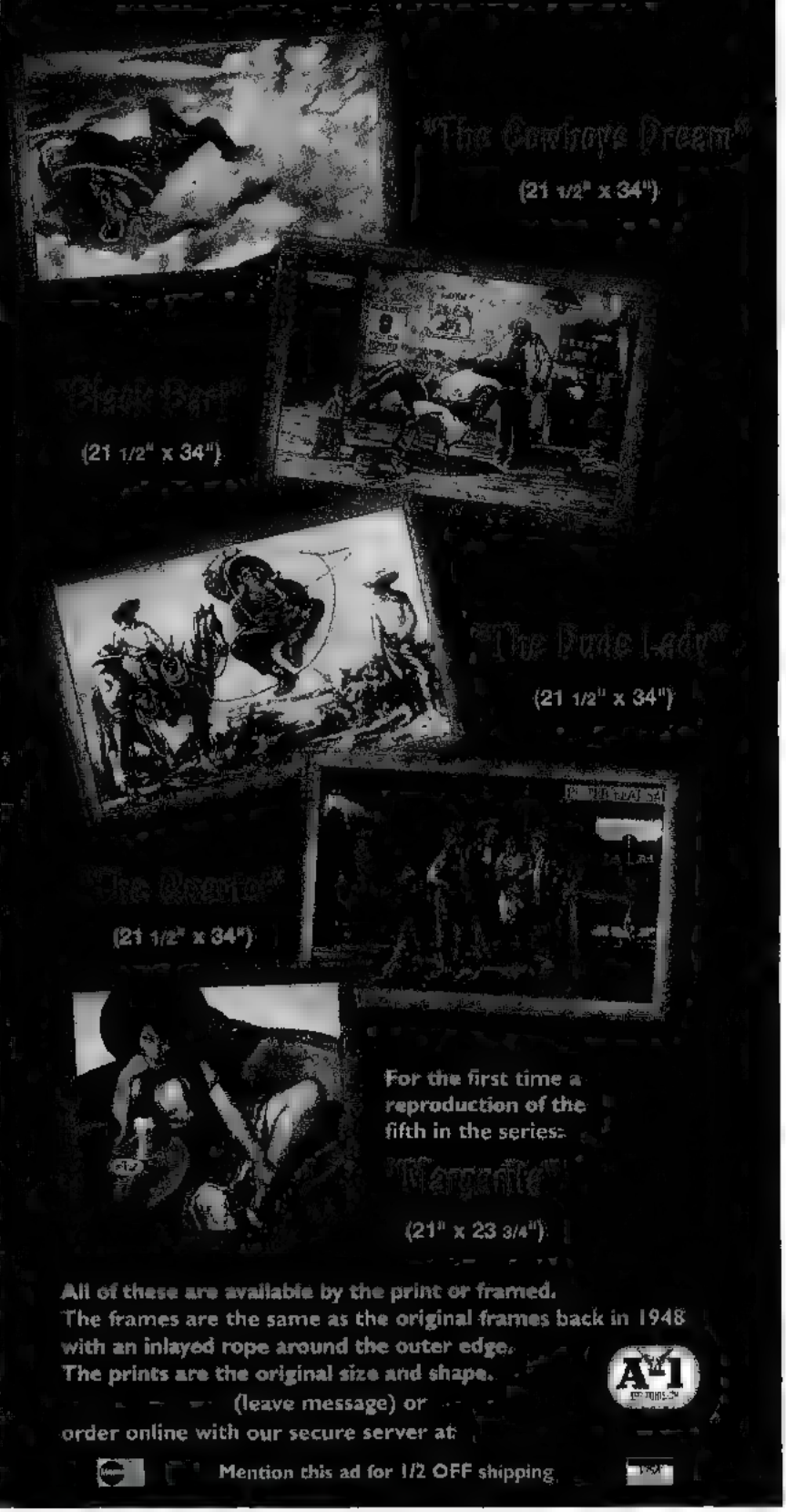

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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

1-5, St Joseph, MO; 25-26, Kansas City, MO; 29-Nov. 2, Peoria, IL, **The Great American Wild West Show:** Celebrate the American West during this Legends of the West tour. **Information:** 870-668-3122 or www.greatamericanwildwestshow.com

4-Nov. 15, Phoenix, AZ, **Native American Recognition Days.** This year's theme is a reunion of kinship, pride and spirit, and includes activities and events for visitors. **Information:** 877-706-4408 or www.aznard.com

17-Nov. 16, Phoenix, AZ, **Cowboy Artists of America 38th Annual Sale & Exhibition:** The premier Western American art sale and exhibition in the country. The sale takes place Friday, October 17 and features over 130 never-before-seen paintings, drawings and sculptures by members of Cowboy Artists of America. **Information:** 602-257-1222 or www.phxart.org

17-19, Tombstone, AZ, **Helldorado Days:** Tombstone's oldest tradition includes re-enactments, a parade, fashion shows, live music, street entertainment, food and Tombstone Vigilettes' Variety Night. **Information:** 520-457-3197

24-25, Kerrville, TX, **Silver Stars & Six Guns 2003:** This year's event is dedicated to the memory of Capt. Samuel Walker and includes golf, a Brunch and Trunk Show, auctions, dinner, Texas Ranger memorabilia and former and current Rangers. **Information:** 830-895-2262

25, San Antonio, TX, **First Buckhorn Western Collectibles Show:** Buy, see, trade or just look as Kurt House and the Buckhorn Saloon present 70 tables of Western artifacts and collectibles, including firearms, spurs, photography, Western art, books and more. A chuck wagon dinner is also available. **Information:** 210-247-4000 or www.buckhornmuseum.com

25, Los Angeles, CA, **Autry Western Music and Cowboy Poetry Gathering:** Celebrate Western traditions with a day of roping, music, poetry and crafts. The Wells Fargo Theatre will showcase 30 acts from across the nation, including Johnny Western, Belinda Gail and Andy Hedges. **Information:** 323-667-2000 or www.autry-museum.org

OCTOBER 11 through JULY 4, 2004
Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles, CA
Glorious Treasures: 100 Years of Collecting by the Southwest Museum

Objects collected since the Southwest Society's initial acquisitions in 1904 are showcased, including many Southwestern archaeological items and art by Maynard Dixon, Joseph Henry Sharp and John Woodhouse Audubon. **Information:** 323-667-2000 or www.autry-museum.org

Lakota doll, c. 1890.

– Courtesy Autry Museum of Western Heritage

25-26, Shakespeare, NM, **Shakespeare Ghost Town:** Relive the Old West through living history tours and re-enactments at this national historic site south of Lordsburg. **Information:** 505-542-9034

NOVEMBER

1-2 & 8-9, San Bernardino, CA, **Harvest Fair:** Take a trip back to the Old West. This fair has live country music, Old West shows, cowboy camps, sutlers and crafts, chuck wagon food, a mariachi band and folklorico dancers. **Information:** 909-384-5426 or www.harvestfair.net

5-9, Heber City, UT, **Cowboy Poetry Gathering and Buckaroo Fair:** Hosted by Waddie Mitchell, other performers include Don Edwards, Baxter Black and Bar J Wranglers. **Information:** 435-654-3666 or www.hebercitycowboypoetry.com

6-9, Tucson, AZ, **Tucson Cowboy Music Roundup:** Four days of cowboy poetry and music, Western wear vendors, memorabilia and cowboy church. **Information:** 520-743-9328 or www.homeranchhands.org

7-9, Tombstone, AZ, **2nd Annual Tombstone Western Music Festival:** Street events, vendors, and evening concerts featuring Belinda Gail and Curly Musgrave. **Information:** 520-457-2295, 520-457-3616 or www.tombstonewesternmusicfestival.com

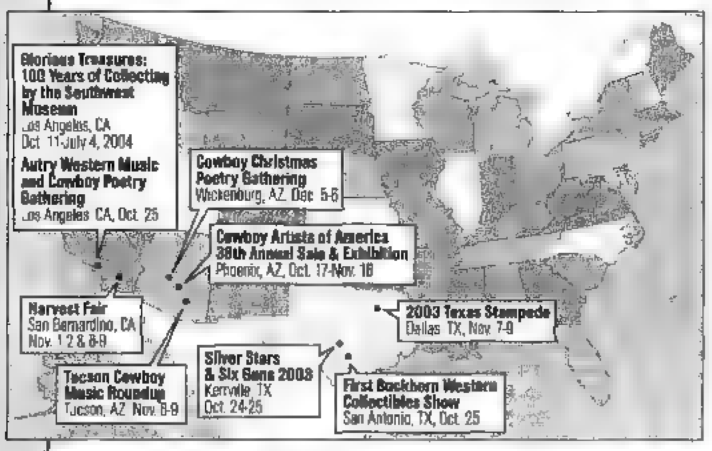
7-9, Dallas, TX, **2003 Texas Stampede:** Experience the world of the cowboy through the new ProRodeo Championship Finale. Contestants compete for a total of $500,000 in seven events. **Information:** 877-210-5425

29, Minden, NE, **Christmas Parade:** A lighted parade around the Harold Warp Pioneer Village Courthouse Square precedes the "Light of the World" Christmas Pageant. **Information:** 800-445-4447 or www.pioneervillage.org

DECEMBER

5-6, Wickenburg, AZ, **Cowboy Christmas Poetry Gathering:** A weekend of poems, songs and ideas with a Western theme. **Information:** 800-942-5242 or www.wickenburgchamber.com/annual.htm

5-7, Monterey, CA, **5th Annual Monterey Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival:** Featured entertainers are Sons of the San Joaquin, Riders in the Sky, Waddie Mitchell and Baxter Black. Also an art and gear show and sale. **Information:** 800-722-9652 or www.montereycowboy.com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Cowboy Christmas Poetry Gathering
Wickenburg, AZ, Dec. 5-6
Cowboy Artists of America 38th Annual Sale & Exhibition
Phoenix, AZ, Oct. 17-Nov. 16
Harvest Fair
San Bernardino, CA
Nov. 1-2 & 8-9
2003 Texas Stampede
Dallas, TX, Nov. 7-9
Tucson Cowboy Music Roundup
Tucson, AZ, Nov. 6-9
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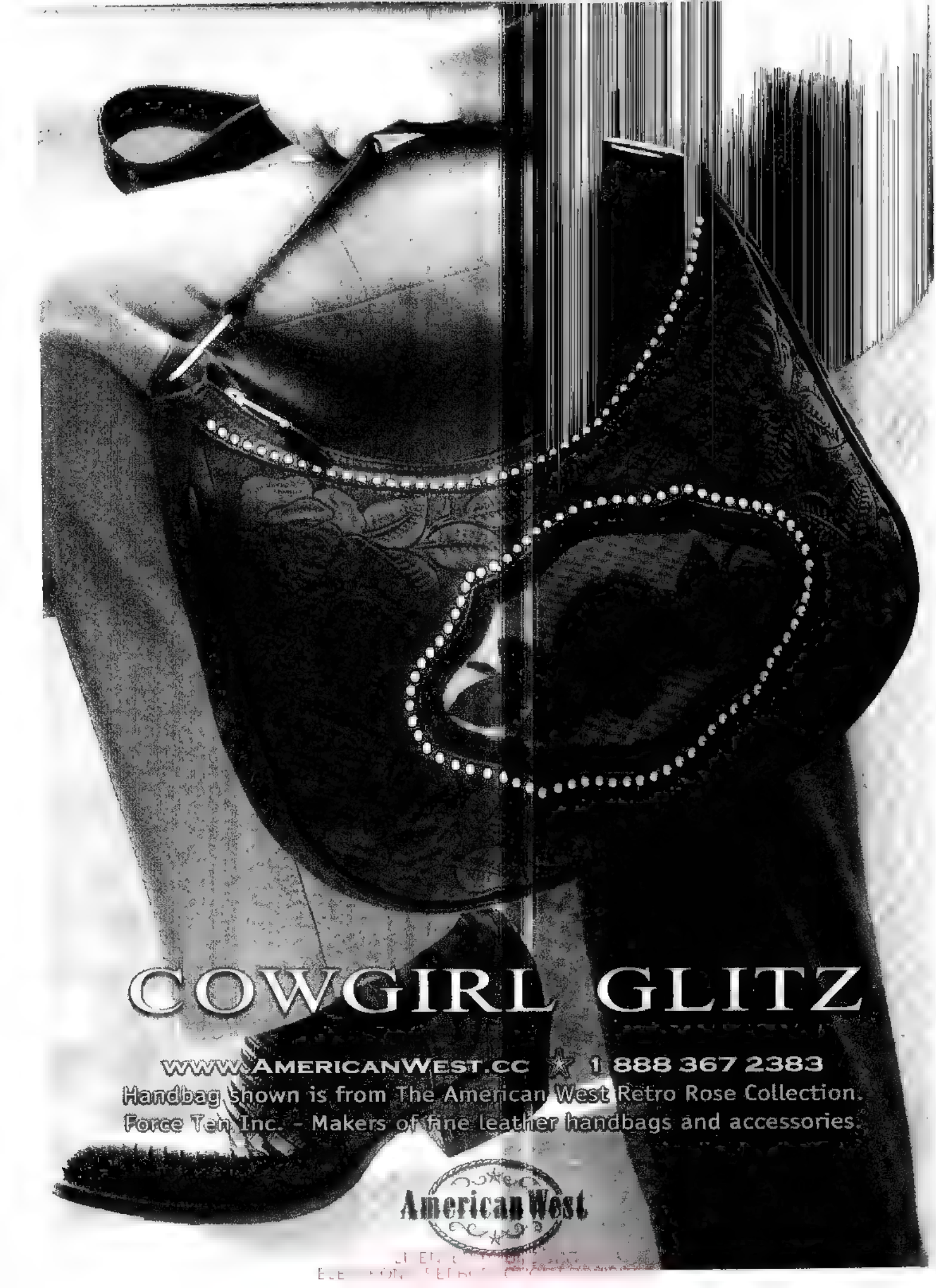
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BY MEGHAN SAAR

Wild Bill Hickok and Family

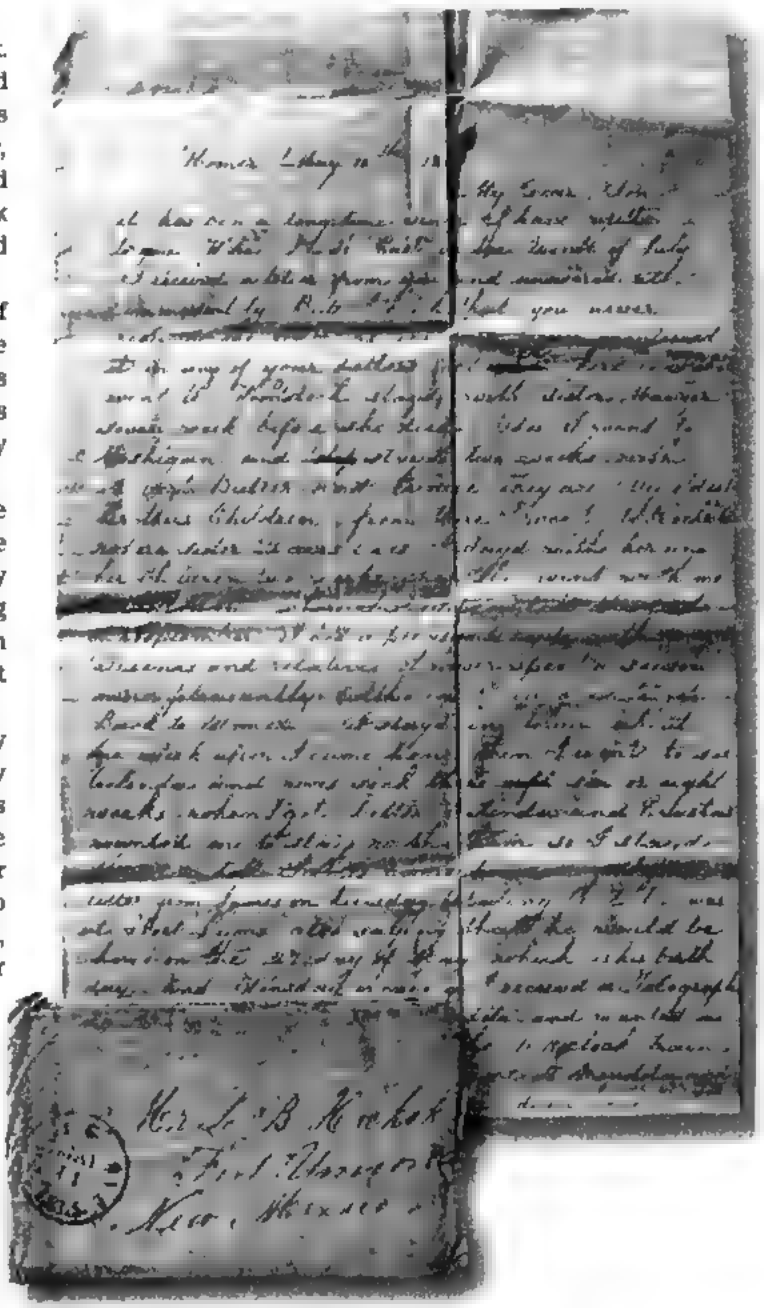
Greg Martin estate sale unravels Hickok myths.

So many myths surround James Butler Hickok. Writers, such as Col. George Ward Nichols, exploited his adventures. Nichols wrote of the "McKandlas affair" in the February 1867 *Harper's New Monthly*, claiming Hickok "went kind of wild" when he killed 10 men after being called to duty at the Rock Creek Pony Express station. Nichols' story began the legend of Wild Bill Hickok.

To unravel long-surviving myths requires the aid of authentic, historical documents, such as these rare items found in Celinda Hickok's estate. As Wild Bill's sister, Celinda was the recipient of numerous letters from James and was a collector of family memorabilia.

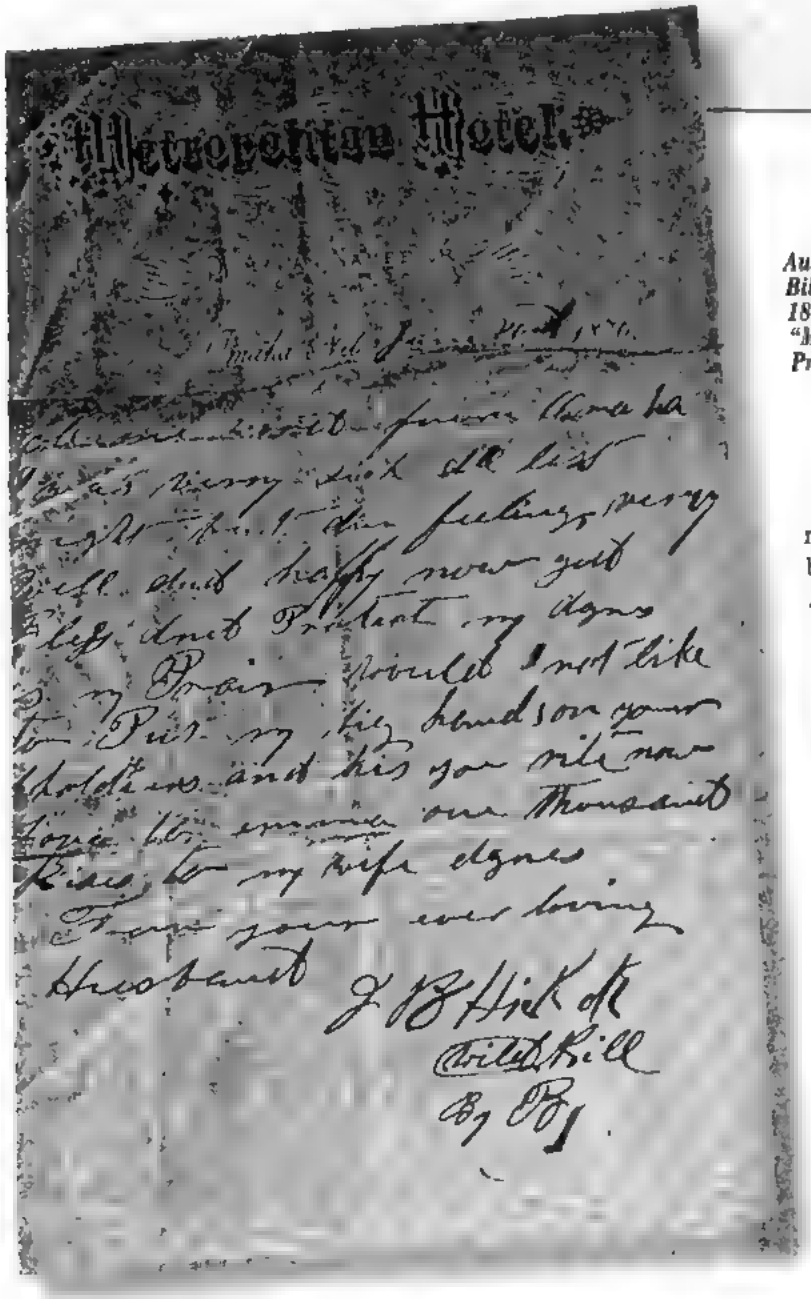
James' other sister, Lydia Hickok Barnes, told the *Chicago Daily Record* in December 1896 that the longest time James was in Homer (now called Troy Grove) was three weeks, and that he was suffering from a lance wound and was treated for it in Mendota, Illinois, as reported by Hickok expert Joseph G. Rosa in the September 2001 *True West*.

Until now, there was no known family correspondence about the event. Polly Hickok's May 10, 1869, letter (right) to her son Lorenzo confirms the following: James' three-week visit home, that he went to Mendota to treat his leg wound for three or four days, received a dispatch from Gen. Philip Sheridan and met with him in Chicago for a week, stayed at the "passenger House" three weeks for further medical treatment and then returned home for an overnight stay before leaving for Leavenworth. James' rendezvous with Gen. Sheridan is new information.



(Above) Autographed letter from Polly Hickok addressed to Lorenzo Butler Hickok; Homer [Troy Grove], Illinois, May 10, 1869; four full pages folio; (inset) envelope addressed to "Mr. L.B. Hickok Fort Union, New Mexico" with circular date stamp "Troy Grove Ills. May 11"; $6,899.

May be the "fotograph" (left) that James gave his mother, mentioned in Polly's letter, at above right; $21,685.


Metropolitan Hotel

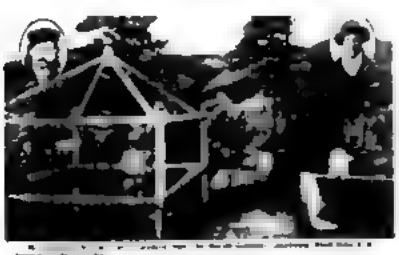
Autographed letter signed "J.B. Hickok Wild Bill" to his wife Agnes Lake Hickok; June 2, 1876; one-page stationary imprinted with "Metropolitan Hotel, D.A. Van Namee, Jr. Proprietor. Omaha, Neb. ----1876"; $167,552.

Another myth that has now been dispelled is many historians had supposed the marriage between J.B. Hickok and former circus actress Agnes Lake had gone sour. Hickok had married Lake—a widow, with a daughter Emma from her previous marriage—on March 5, 1876. The couple was thought to have an unhappy union because in June, shortly after their honeymoon in Cincinnati, Ohio, Hickok left for the Black Hills. Yet, two months to the day before his assassin Jack McCall shot him, Hickok sent this touching love letter (left) from Omaha, Nebraska, writing to Agnes "would I not like to Put my big hands on your Sholdiers and kiss you rite now."

Rosa says that on June 30, 1876, Agnes wrote to Celinda Hickok: "I will remit you [James'] last letter from Omaha." Celinda never returned it.

What is most interesting about Celinda's collection is that it was discovered 87 years after her death. Private collector Michael Deocostello has been collecting the materials over many years, a Greg Martin spokesperson said.

On June 16, 2003, Greg Martin Auctions of San Francisco, California, sold 24 letters, 12 photographs, six postcards and 26 family documents. The estate sale totaled $410,601 and its pieces confirmed or added to Wild Bill research. "The chance to examine the Hickok materials was any historian's dream," said Rosa, who wrote the auction catalog's foreword.



Three of the six postcards (1910-29) related to Wild Bill; one with autographed letter signed on the back; (counter clockwise, from top left) view of Wild Bill and Calamity Jane's gravesites; bird's-eye view of Deadwood, South Dakota; and Wild Bill portrait; $788.

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BY PHIL SPANGENBERGER

Old West Gun Facts

The Yellowboy, the Strap Pistol and the Sporting Model.

In the mid-1870s, the government tested the 1873 Colt (left) and the 1875 Smith & Wesson Schofield (right). Although the military officially adopted the Colt, they chose S&W Schofield's less potent .45 caliber cartridge because both guns could use it.

■ Did you know that the 1866 Winchester, often called the "Yellowboy," was not referred to as the Model 1866 by the Winchester factory until the introduction of the famed Model 1873 lever-action rifle? When first introduced, the brass-framed '66 was officially dubbed the "Improved Henry," since the rifle was an updated Model 1860 Henry, and it fired the same rimfire ammunition.

■ Winchester's 1873 lever gun was the company's first centerfire (then called central fire) rifle. The .44-40 round, also known as the .44 WCF (Winchester Central Fire), was designed as a rifle cartridge, although in modern times it is largely thought of as a revolver load.

■ Winchester's behemoth Model 1876 is an enlarged and more powerful Model 1873 that was designed to take ammunition suitable for big game hunting. Since the 1876 rifle was introduced during America's centennial year, it was first known as the "Centennial Model."

Winchester's Model 1876 rifle was initially called the "Centennial Model" in honor of the United States' 100th anniversary. The '76 carbine was officially adopted by Canada's Northwest Mounted Police, as shown in this circa 1904 photo.

– ALL PHOTOS COURTESY PHIL SPANGENBERGER

■ Colt's famed 1873 Single Action Army revolver was initially designated the "Strap Pistol," since it was Colt's first big-bore handgun to have a top strap on the frame. The moniker of "Peacemaker" didn't come along for another few years, though most folks knew the gun by its sobriquet. The first SAA Colt was chambered in .44 Russian caliber, but the gun was returned to the factory for the design of a more powerful load—thus making the revolver a .45 caliber Colt.

■ In the mid-1870s, the U.S. Army tested Colt's SAA, along with the Smith & Wesson Schofield revolver, eventually adopting the more powerful Colt. Both were .45 caliber revolvers, but the cartridge strength and lengths differed: Colt's load carried 40 grains of black powder and pushed a 255-grain lead bullet, but it wouldn't fit the Schofield's shorter chambers; the S&W Schofield round carried just 28 grains of black powder and a 230-grain lead slug. Although the Colt became the official military sidearm, several thousand Schofields were retained and used. In an effort to have one cartridge that would fit both guns, the army stopped making the larger Colt load and designated the weaker and shorter Schofield cartridge as the standard government pistol round. Ironically, one of the reasons the military preferred the Colt over the S&W was the Peacemaker's greater power.

■ One of the most famous buffalo rifles of all time—the Model 1874 Sharps—was actually first sold in late 1870 and was called the "Sporting Model." It wasn't until around 1875, when the Model 1875 Sharps was produced with a redesigned action, that the Sporting Model was given the 1874 designation.

Phil

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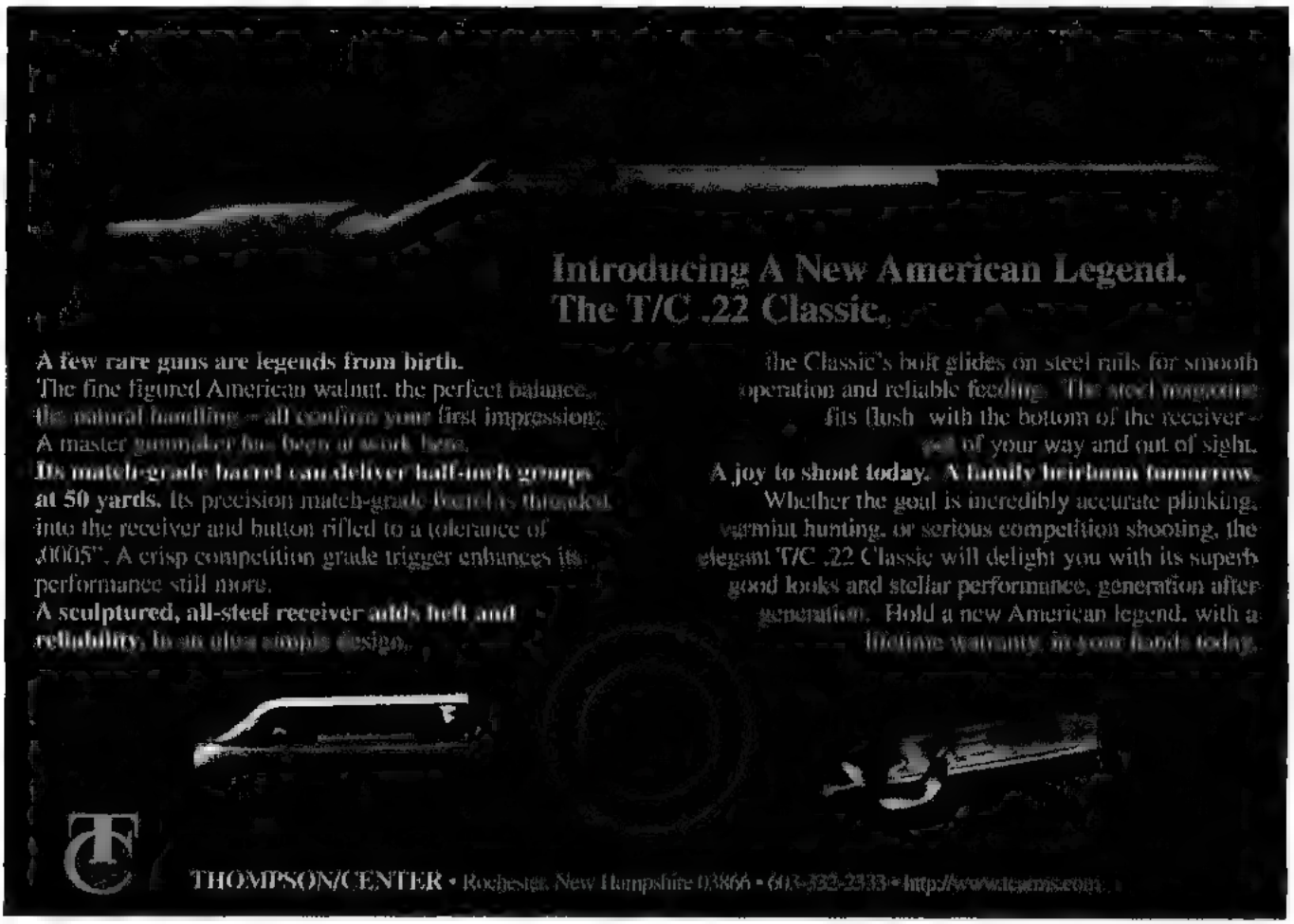
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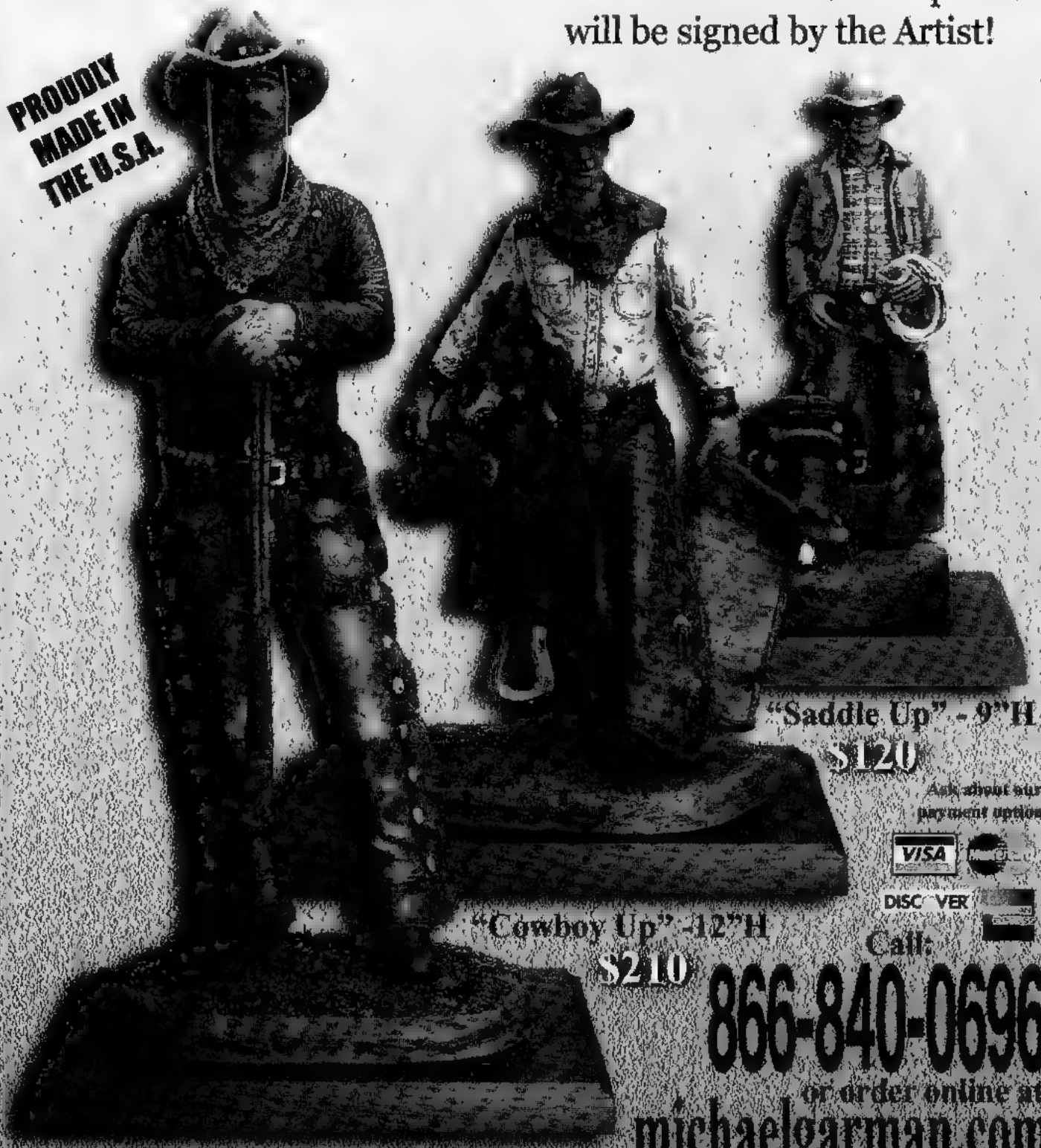

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Kid Dig Turns Nasty

The story so far

The debate is raging about New Mexico's plans to dig up Billy the Kid. Nowhere has that been more evident than on the "Letters to the Editor" page of the *Ruidoso News*. On the next page are excerpts of letters published in June, which show how hot passions are burning. Below is a timeline on the digging-up-Billy controversy, which will be continually updated at www.truewestmagazine.com.

April 28, 2003: Case no. 2003-274 officially opens. Lincoln County Sheriff Tom Sullivan and Deputy Sheriff Steve Sederwall fire two blanks inside the jail to test the theory that Billy's shots killing Deputy Jim Bell in 1881 were heard by Deputy Bob Olinger as he was having dinner at the Wortley Hotel, prompting him to come running—only to be gunned down by the Kid.

June 5: For the first time ever, Billy the Kid is mentioned on the front page of *The New York Times* in a story announcing New Mexico's plans to dig him up to settle lingering questions.

June 6: *True West* changes its front cover three days before the magazine is sent to press and writes up the "Digging Up Billy" story.

June 10: New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson announces his support for the investigation into the life and death of Henry McCarty, also known as William Bonney, also known as Billy the Kid.

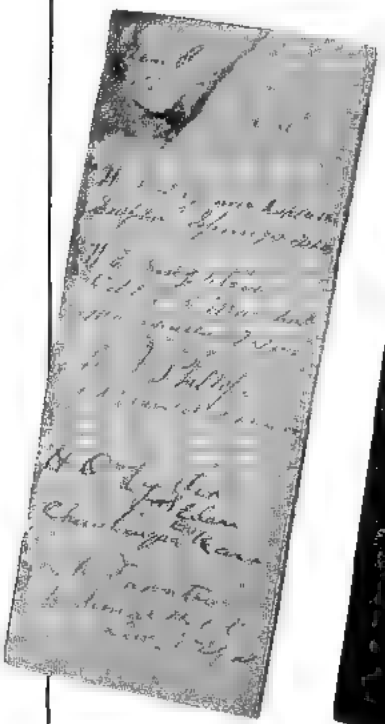
June 12: Billy the Kid expert Frederick Nolan's heated letter to the editor is published in the *Ruidoso News*. (See face-off on next page.)

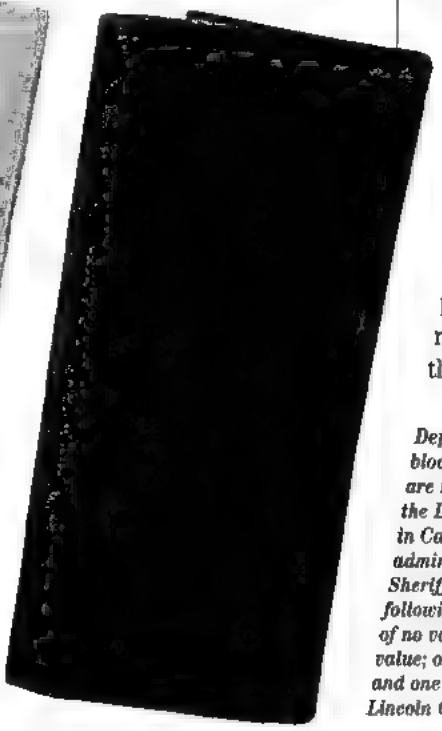
July 8: The *Daily News-Sun* of Northwest Phoenix, Arizona, prints an Associated Press story reporting Texans are making a hoopla over New Mexico continually ignoring evidence that Brushy Bill was Billy the Kid. Their opinion: New Mexico should dig up its Billy before coming to unearth Brushy Bill in Texas.

July 14: Lincoln County officials intend to exhume the body of Catherine Antrim, Billy the Kid's mother, but plans are thwarted by last minute legal problems and because, Sederwall says, "it's too damn hot." (Silver City recorded 100 degrees that day.)

July 19: Lincoln County officials stage an 1800s funeral procession and ceremony to place a tombstone on the recently discovered grave of Deputy James W. Bell. Among the mourners are Jannay Valdez, curator of the (Brushy Bill) Billy the Kid Museum in Hico, Texas, Drew Gomber, historian for the Hubbard Museum of the American West, and Bob Boze Bell (no relation).

Aug 3: Gov. Richardson considers appointing legal counsel to represent the Kid's interests.





Deputy Sheriff Robert Olinger's bloody wallet and papers (left) are mounted in a glass case at the Lincoln County Court House in Carrizozo, New Mexico. As administrator to Olinger's estate, Sheriff Pat Garrett inventoried the following items: one wallet with papers of no value; one broken shotgun of no value; one Elgin watch valued at $1.00 and one set of clothes of no value, said Lincoln County Clerk Tammie J. Maddox.

– By Bob Boze Bell –

Digging Up Billy is Horse Feathers.

Author ***Frederick Nolan*** *of England, a noted Billy the Kid expert:*

– Illustration by Bob Boze Bell –

I hate to be a party-pooper, but this whole project is a complete and utter nonsense, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if Sheriff Sullivan and [Capitan] Mayor Sederwall are already wishing they'd never got started on this benighted project.

After 129 years in Catherine Antrim's case and 122 in the Kid's, there would be little if anything left of them, even if we could be sure [of where the graves are].

And as for digging up Brushy Bill, puh-lease! Surely, there cannot be anyone left on the face of the globe who still believes that pathetic old phoney. . . . Do we need yet again to go through the whole charade of 'proving' to the wishful thinkers and the *Young Guns* nuts that . . . the Roberts family bible shows his date of birth as 1879, and that he was exactly 2 years old at the time of the Kid's death?

It's indicative of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office's complete ignorance of history that they talk about finding 'family' who would be in a position to grant permission for exhumation of either the Kid or Catherine's bodies. . . .

The whole project is positively ludicrous; it doesn't seem to me they have anything even remotely resembling a raison d'etre—in fact, I think [Capitan Mayor and Deputy Sheriff Steve] Sederwall is making it up as he goes along, reacting to events rather than taking predetermined action.

Another question that I'd be asking if I were an American taxpayer is, why exactly is the Sheriff's Office of Lincoln County wasting time and money chasing these chimeras across three states and who gave it the authority to do so instead of doing what it is paid to do—combat crime and uphold the law?

To me, all this stuff about 'clearing Garrett's name' looks suspiciously like horse-feathers and I suspect the real reason for the 'investigation' is so the boys in the LCSO can have what sailors call a 'jolly,' i.e. a pleasure trip, in this instance providing not only merciful release from the boredom of the day job, but also all-expenses-paid trips to Denver, Hico, Fort Sumner and Silver City, headlines in the papers, and 15 seconds of notoriety. Hey, it's all part of the job, right?

Or is it, perhaps, just the opening of the tourist season over there in New Mexico?

No, It's Not.

Lincoln County Sheriff ***Tom Sullivan*** *and Deputy Sheriff* ***Steve Sederwall*** *responded:*

We read your, shall we say, degrading, letter. . . . It surprised us; we thought if anyone wanted the truth about the Billy the Kid story it would be writers of history. Yet, the only two complaints we have had come from you and Bob Utley . . . . With the two of you having books on the market, you have a financial interest in history staying as you say.

In two different books [*The West of Billy the Kid* and *The Lincoln County War*] you've written about two different times the escape occurred [of Billy from the Lincoln County Jail—one book says 5 p.m., the other says noon. . . .] We were hoping you could clear up that piece of confusing history by telling us which of your two stories you would like to hold up as your 'sound' version?

In both your books you mention at least three different theories of how the Kid escaped. We hate to show our 'complete ignorance of history,' but what we know for a fact [from] reading your writings is on April 28, 1881, in a five-hour span something happened. We don't know what or how, but something happened. You can see how confusing it is to we non-history types.

You were concerned for the American taxpayer; we would like to put your mind to rest. All investigative time has been voluntary. . . .

We are looking at these murders because that's what we do. We stand behind the same badge J.W. Bell stood behind when he was shot and killed by the Kid. Although, our equipment is different, our methods are different, we are still cops doing the same job. We take it personally when another cop loses his life doing what we all do and feel we owe it to him to look at the circumstances of his death and not sweep it under the carpet.

We invite you to join our search for the truth. . . . If you choose to do so we promise not to play historian, provided you leave the police work to us.

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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

Vera Changes Rodeo Fashion

Another chapter in Vera McGinnis' life.

Will Rogers' children inspired Vera to rodeo in pants and her fashion statement inspired a famous cartoon character.

"Mary Rogers wore long white-flannel pants exactly like her brothers," Vera remembered in her autobiography. "They looked so neat and easy to work in compared with the tight breeches we wore. I thought, 'Why not?' The next week I had some made. I wore them for the first time at the Fort Worth Fat Stock Show that spring [1924], and they were a hit. Later, while in Europe, I had my complete new wardrobe fashioned with long pants. When I returned to the States I found that many of the girls had followed my lead."

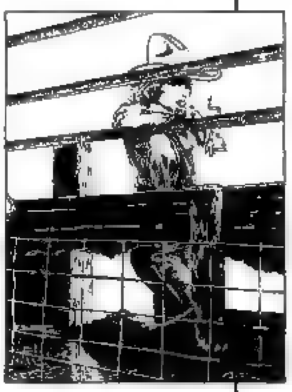
It seems so trivial now, but a woman wearing pants in public—and being so bold as to flaunt it—was shocking and risque in 1924 when Vera McGinnis put on this outfit.

– Courtesy of Vera's Grandniece Phyllis Gendreau –

To understand how phenomenal that was, consider that true to the fashion of the day, Vera wore her Bon-Ton corset into her first rodeo ring—the last time she ever locked herself into that restricting garment for a competition. And listen to her description of expected fashion: "When I first started to ride, we wore divided skirts and tied them down below the knees when we did fancy riding, being very careful not to expose any leg between the skirt and the boot top. . . . I wished we could wear pants, but back then we didn't even wear Levi's at home on the ranch."

When she got up the nerve to challenge that, she got help from her mother, who had become a professional seamstress. Mother Sarah executed many of Vera's designs. Fellow rider and friend Reba Perry Blakely wrote that Vera "should have taken out trademarks on her costumes," because the royalties would have made her rich.

Champion cowgirl Paris Wilhams once wrote, "One thing that makes me very angry is the fact that no one has ever given Vera McGinnis full credit for her impact in changing the entire cowgirl wardrobes. . . . We went to Fort Worth that spring, and believe me, all those other cowgirls were all eyes when Vera came riding into the rodeo arena. For she was wearing those very first all-tailored long pants costumes with the slight belled bottoms, and no pockets. They caught on like a house-a-fire."



Vera McGinnis was the model for Bob Boze Bell's saucy Honkytonk Sue, a cowgirl who didn't take no guff from nobody.

Illustration by Bob Boze Bell –

Vera herself was trying hard to make sure her contribution to rodeo fashion wasn't ignored. In the files of the Cowgirl Hall of Fame, there's a letter she wrote to a magazine that didn't honor her breakthrough: "The layout in *Persimmon Hill* was delightful but I was very disappointed in not getting a single credit. The picture of me in long pants at London was the nearest but that didn't even tell the story. That suit and others like it were the first long pants ever worn in the rodeo arena."

What Vera McGinnis never knew is that her panache in that article inspired a young Arizona artist to create a gutsy Western woman cartoon character who'd appear in magazines and books.

Yes, she was the model for Bob Boze Bell's famous Honkytonk Sue.

Next issue: Vera fights for her honor.

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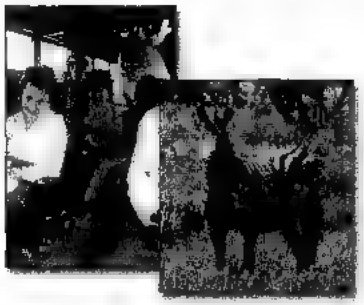

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OUR

2nd Annual BEST of the WEST

Celebrating our 50th anniversary, we at *True West* again reveal our hoarded nuggets, our favorite out-of-the-way secrets: the best brothel museum, the top country music artist, the wildest Western towns—the West's best, bar none. We also share your picks in the Readers' Choice. So dive on in and feast on the best of the West. We're betting you'll be glad you did.

Best of the West Artists

Best Cowboy Artist of All Time

Charlie Russell

Some may quibble with the singular title (many consider Russell-Remington to be joined at the easel), but Charlie Russell was the first bona fide cowboy artist in the land. Remington painted many cowboys, Indians and soldiers, but Russell created some 5,000 Western works of art and never once portrayed a soldier. Interesting, eh? **Readers' Choice:** Charlie Russell

Best Contemporary Western Artist

John Moyers

Because of the proliferation of so-called "Cowboy Art," it is increasingly hard to break new trails, especially when the back trail is lit by such painting giants as Gordon Snidow, Bill Owen and James Reynolds. But one young artist (okay, he's 45) is breathing new life into a somewhat predictable genre. John Moyers, the son of cowboy artist Wilham Moyers, has not only found new trails but also new ways to incorporate old, classic themes, and his emphasis on Mexican vaqueros is a breath of fresh air. Not surprisingly, John is currently president of Cowboy Artists of America. **Readers' Choice:** Buck Taylor

Best Native American Artist

Jordan Torres

Though he's not as well-known as Pahponee or Oreland C. Joe, we opt for this New Mexico artist whose alabaster sculptures recreate his Lipan, Mescalero and Chiricahua Apache heritage. Besides, how many Indian artists are descendants of Cochise? **Readers' Choice:** Maria Martinez

Best Western Historical Sculptor

Robert Broshears

Although Bob has sculpted everything from wildlife to mountain men, it was his portrayal of Doc Holliday and Wyatt Earp that got our attention. The level of detail, down to the removable revolvers with ivory grips, sets his work apart from any we've ever seen.

Best Western Sculptor

Susan Kliewer

Susan credits her father's career in forestry and a wall calendar painting by Frederic Remington for awakening her interest in art when she was a child. Susan's bronzes depict everything from Native Americans and cowboys to a 10-foot tall bronze monument honoring Sedona Schnebly, the namesake of Sedona, Arizona.

Best of the West Books/Writers

Best Living Western Historical Novelist

Lucia St. Clair Robson

Beginning with her first book, *Ride the Wind* (about Comanche captive Cynthia Ann Parker), through her latest, *Ghost Warrior: Lozen of the Apaches*, Lucia combines a historian's knowledge of facts with a novelist's understanding of the human condition. As a result, she's able to transport her readers to a world that is so real, they can smell the sweat.

Best Living Western Novelist

Elmer Kelton

Winner of seven Spur Awards and, in 1995, voted "the greatest Western author of all time" by Western Writers of America. Enough said!

Best National Publisher of Western Fiction

Forge Books

New York, New York

Forge's stable of Western writers is a Who's Who of the genre. At a time when much of the publishing industry considers the Western novel if not dead, certainly comatose, Forge keeps Western literature alive by publishing authors such as Elmer Kelton, Lucia St. Clair Robson and Loren Estleman. **Readers' Choice:** Bantam Dell/New York, NY

Best National Publisher of Western Nonfiction

Arthur H. Clark Co.

Spokane, Washington

The company's decision to reissue LeRoy R. Hafen's 10-volume masterpiece *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West* (to date eight volumes have been reprinted) all but guaranteed Arthur H. Clark Co. would win this category. The company's offering of rare books on the American West is as good as the best university presses and better than most. **Readers' Choice:** University of Oklahoma Press/Norman, OK

Best Place to Publish Your Own Book

Morris Publishing

Kearney, Nebraska

So you've written a novel about your great-great gunfighting grandfather and the New York publishers aren't beating down your door. Not to worry, Morris Publishing may be your answer. This family-owned

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publishing company specializes in short-run printing—200 to 5,000 copies. Morris will walk you through the steps needed to get your book from your computer to bookstore shelves. And yes, Morris will take the mystery out of bar codes, ISBNs and Library of Congress Control Numbers.

Best Regional Publisher of Western Nonfiction

The Early West

College Station, Texas

Whether it's Billy the Kid or John Wesley Hardin, the Early West's repertoire of books on 19th-century outlaws and lawmen is certain to thrill and satisfy the most discerning Old West buff.

Best University Press Publisher of Western Nonfiction

University of Oklahoma Press

Norman, Oklahoma

With its annual offering of new books about the American West and its large inventory of backlisted Western history titles, the UOP is a godsend to both professional writers and armchair historians. While many university presses ignore the history of the Old West in favor of more trendy subjects, the UOP keeps our Western heritage from being forgotten.

Best Western Bookstores

Arizona: Guidon Books, Scottsdale

California: Argonaut, San Francisco

Colorado: Tattered Cover Bookstore, Denver

Idaho: The Yesteryear Shoppe, Nampa

New Mexico: High-Lonesome Books, Silver City

Oklahoma: Full Circle Books, Oklahoma City

Oregon: Powell's City of Books, Portland

South Dakota: Prairie Edge Bookstore, Rapid City

Texas: The Bookshop, Marble Falls

Utah: Sam Weller's Zion Books, Salt Lake City

Washington: Arthur H. Clark Co., Spokane

Wyoming: Blue Heron Books, Casper

Clothing/Equipment

Best Backcountry Outfitter

High Wild & Lonesome

Big Piney, Wyoming

Ranch-raised Mike and Bobbi Wade get high marks for celebrating everything Western in the Cowboy State. They'll help you get up close and personal with wild mustangs, cattle drives and the Pony Express Trail, while you soak up history, oodles of sunshine and Wyoming's fall colors. These cowboy, horseback adventures aren't for the faint of heart or soft of butt. **Readers' Choice:** Cabela's Outdoor Adventures/Sidney, NE

Best Contemporary Western Designer

Chandler Liberty

Liberty Westerns

Santa Fe, New Mexico

She's Nashville's Music Row, Dodge City's Front Street and a New York runway rolled into one. Chandler Liberty's custom-made apparel is a throwback to Nudie Cohen while incorporating the contemporary style of Manuel. She has helped outfit the cast of *Annie Get Your Gun* and millionaires wanting a one-of-a-kind look for a buckaroo ball. **Readers' Choice:** Panhandle Slim/Fort Worth, TX

Best Historic Western Designer

Recollections

Hawks, Michigan

If Ethel Place, the Sundance Kid's beautiful paramour, were alive today, she would undoubtedly purchase her dresses at Recollections. Only here will you find a bathing suit that reminds you of a summer dress with short pants. Oh, excuse us, we mean a bathing costume. **Readers' Choice:** Wahmaker/Oxnard, CA

Best Vintage Western Clothing Outfitter

Scully

Oxnard, California

Dan Scully's company has earned accolades for its leather line, but more recently its vintage clothing has come into vogue. Scully produces the Wahmaker line—popular with Single Action Shooting Society members. In addition, its retro look of singing cowboy shirts would leave Gene, Roy and Dale envious. **Readers' Choice:** Wild West Mercantile/Phoenix, AZ

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BEST FAMILY ORIENTED DUDE RANCH

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BEST HORSE TRAINER

PAUL DIETZ

DESERT HILLS, ARIZONA

Paul Dietz's expertise with horses is sought out by everyone from beginning riders to Olympic gold medalists. Whether you're trail riding, working cow horses, competing or you just want to hone your horsemanship, Dietz can take you from green to cowboy better than most. **Readers' Choice:** Pat Parelli/Pagosa Springs, CO

BEST TRICK ROPER

WILL ROGERS

Sure there are other guys and gals skilled at twirling a rope. None of them, however, have Will Rogers' panache. Until his untimely death in a small plane, this "Roping Fool" entertained millions with not only his rope skills but also his wit. **Readers' Choice:** Will Rogers

SHOOTING/FIREARMS

BEST MOUNTED SHOOTING EVENT

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BEST SINGLE ACTION SHOOTING MATCH

END OF TRAIL

NORCO, CALIFORNIA

No matter if you're the fastest gun alive—single action, that is, no double actions here—or you enjoy watching talented shooters dressed as if they had just stepped out of an Overland stagecoach, this annual five-day world championship of cowboy action is just plain fun. **Readers' Choice:** End of Trail

BEST OLD WEST SHOOT-OUT

COFFEYVILLE RAID

In terms of sheer firepower and killing action, it's hard to match the number of bullets and shooters in front of and inside the Condon bank in downtown Coffeyville, Kansas, on October 5, 1892. The ill-fated Dalton raid on two banks simultaneously resulted in the deaths of four outlaws, four townsmen and four horses. If you're into numerology, or simply a student of Old West history, one thing is clear: don't mess with Kansas farmers during hunting season.

BEST TRICK GUN HANDLER

JOEY DILLON

Watching Joey "twirl" his Cimarron single action revolvers gives new meaning to "Shock & Awe." Dillon won the World Gunspinning Championship in 2001. Now 22, Dillon has won the Wild West Arts Club Championship, the Pat Rowan Award for Gunhandling and the Joe Bowman Award for Showmanship.

BEST TRICK SHOOTER

BOB MUNDEN

For the second year, Bob has earned this honor. No one comes close to Bob's ability; he's so fast that his reaction time baffles

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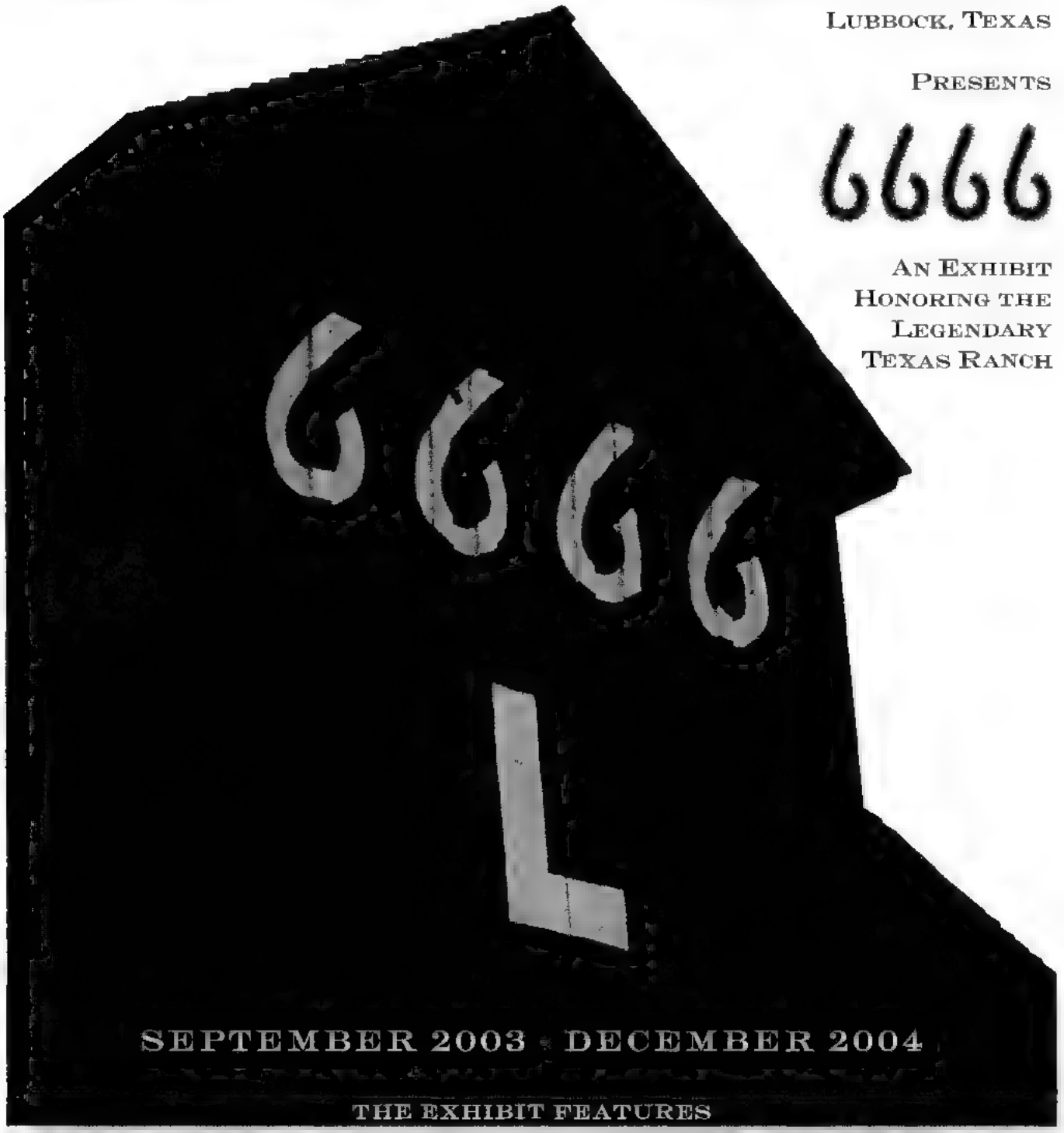

September 2003 - December 2004

The Exhibit Features

★ Furnishings & Artifacts from the Headquarters

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★ Collection of Quanah Parker Artifacts

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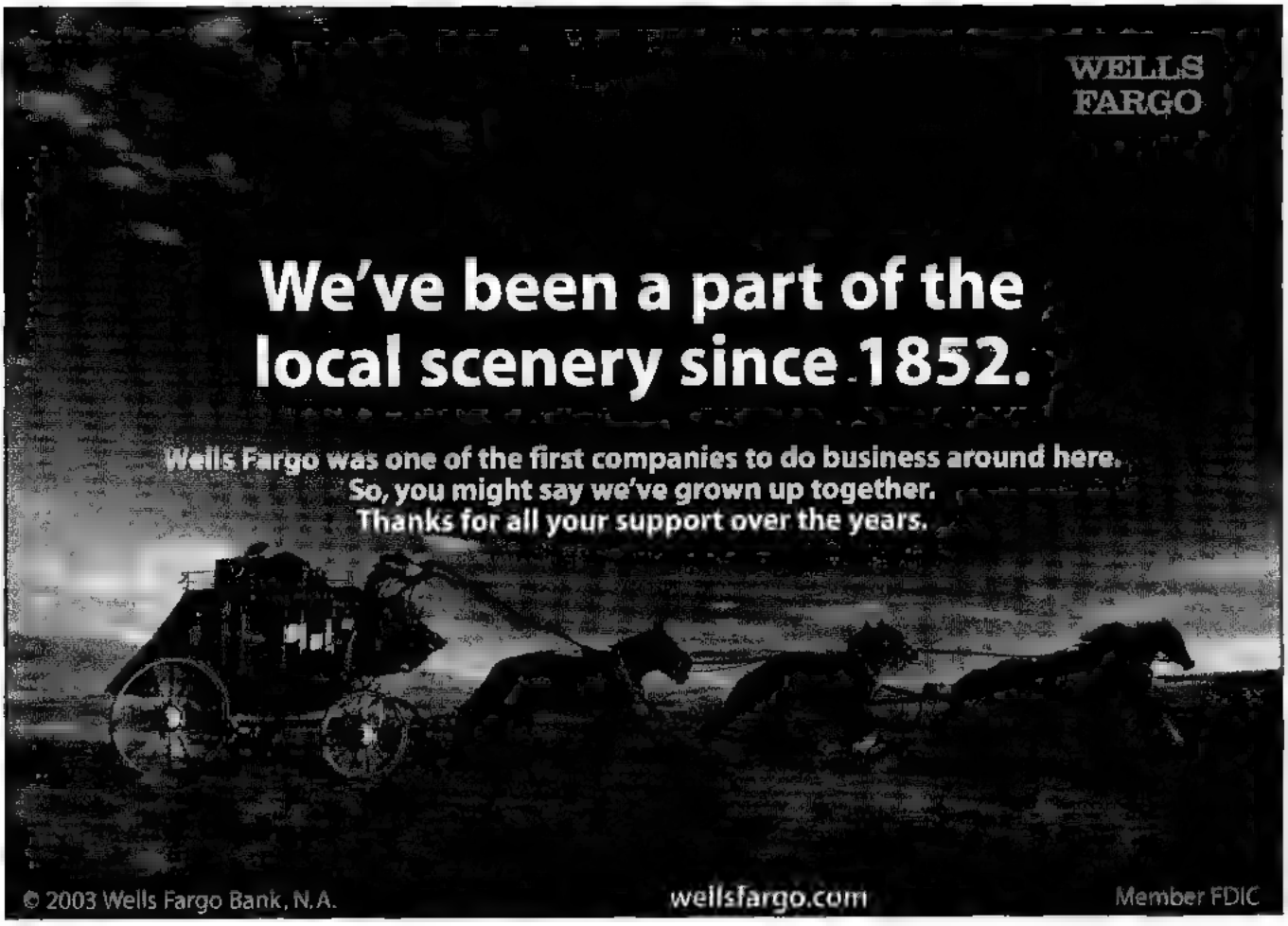
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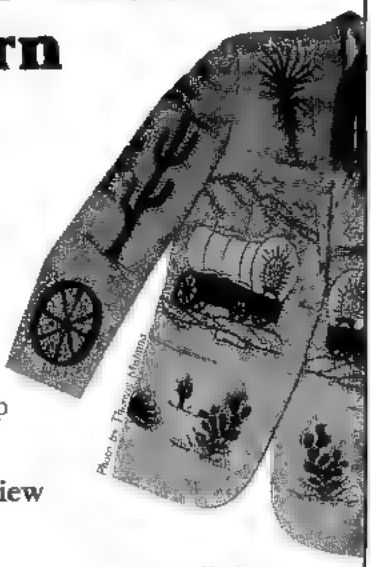

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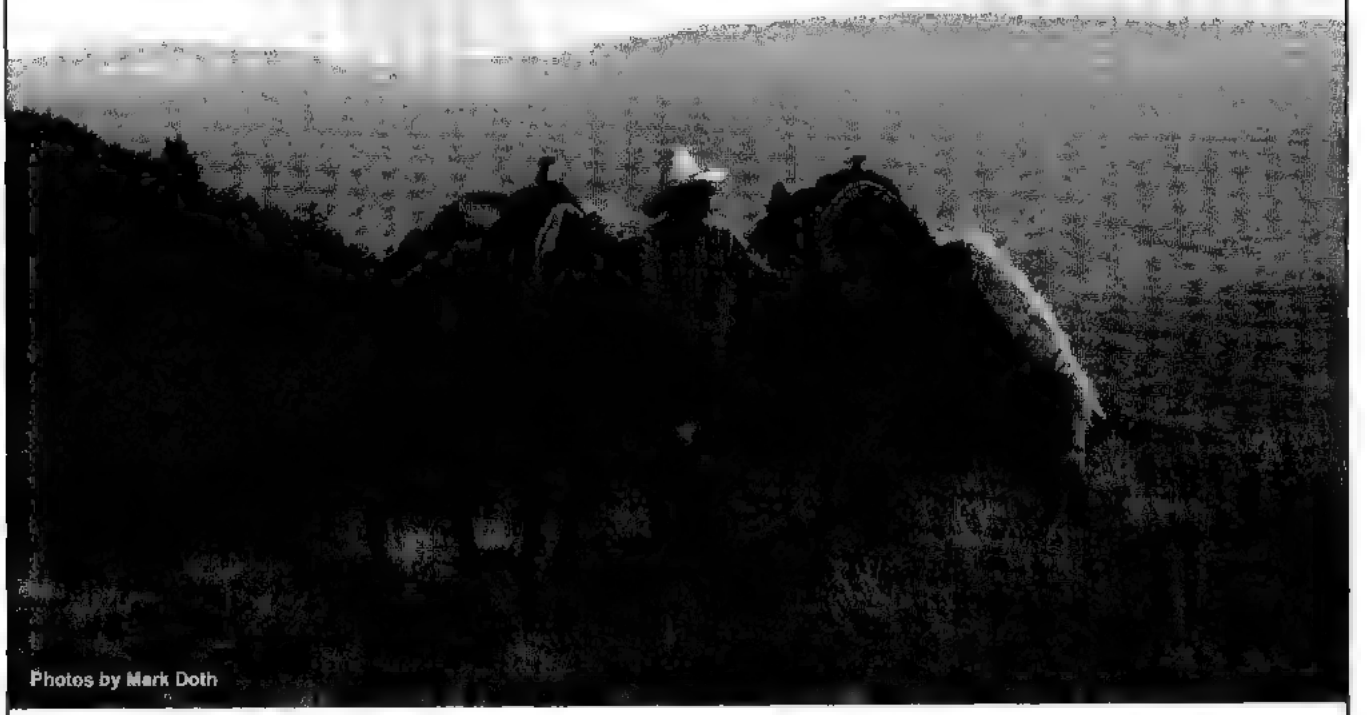

Photos by Mark Doth

Ruidoso, New Mexico

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Shooting/Firearms continued

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Henry Big Boy

Henry Repeating Arms Co.
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Chambered in .44 magnum, this big lever action powerhouse will never be mistaken for a squirrel gun. And besides packing a wallop, the gun has a famous pedigree, tracing its lineage back to the man who invented the famous Henry Rifle, Benjamin Tyler Henry. During the Civil War, one Confederate officer said, "It's a rifle that you could load on Sunday and shoot all week long."

Best Cap and Ball Revolver Reproduction

1851 Navy Colt

Navy Arms Co.

Union City, New Jersey

If this handgun was good enough for Wild Bill Hickok, it's good enough for us. He carried a pair of '51 Navy Colts even after the advent of cartridge revolvers. Navy Arms' reproduction, chambered in .36 or .44 caliber, is a pleasure to own, whether you want to shoot it or merely put it out for display. **Readers' Choice:** 1851 Navy Colt

Best Cartridge Conversion Revolver Reproduction

1860 Richards-Mason Army Conversion

Cimarron F.A. Co.

Fredericksburg, Texas

Cimarron's 1860 Richards-Mason Army Conversion reproduction, chambered in .45 S&W Schofield, .44 Colt, .44 Russian or .38 special, is accurate and fun to shoot. Original conversion models were as popular with Old West cowboys (who couldn't afford a newer Colt Single Action Army) as the replicas are with today's cowboy action shooters.

Best Commemorative Firearm

John Wayne Coach Gun

America Remembers

Ashland, Virginia

True West field editor Phil Spangenberger picked the double-barrel shotgun as the most important gun of the 19th century (Feb/March 2003). America Remembers' commemorative 24-karat gold-engraved, 12-gauge double-barrel coach gun not only celebrates the shotgun's importance in "taming" the Old West, but it also serves as a tribute to John Wayne. **Readers' Choice:** 1984 Winchester-Colt Commemorative Set by U.S. Repeating Arms Co./New Haven, Connecticut

Best Custom Gunsmith

Bob James

Legendary Guns

Phoenix, Arizona

About 40 years ago, the sport of quick draw got Bob into gunsmithing when he needed to build up his own single action revolvers so they would be able to stand the thousands of rounds of ammunition he was firing. Today, Bob's reputation as a gun doctor has gun owners lining up at his doorstep, whether it's to beef up a factory gun or to restore a valuable antique.

Best Custom Old West Gun Manufacturer

Kenny Howell

R & D Gun Shop

Beloit, Wisconsin

Kenny is classified as a gun manufacturer and not simply a gunsmith because he's one of a few who can make a gun from a block of steel and wood. We're not talkin' just any gun. Kenny made the revolvers used by Will Smith in the remake of *Wild Wild West*. He also made Tom Selleck's guns for *The Last Stand at Sabre River*, *Crossfire Trail*, *Monte Walsh* and the upcoming *The Empty Land*.

Best Lever Action Rifle

.30-30 Model 336

The Marlin Firearms Co.

North Haven, Connecticut

When John Marlin first made the Model 336 in 1893, he probably never guessed he had just produced what would become his company's most famous rifle and one of the most popular rifles of all time. Today, Marlin's .30-30 is still top dog among lever action rifles, in part because its sturdy receiver permits more chamberings than its competition.

Best Old West Non-Firing Replica Firearm

1892 (Winchester) Western Carbine

Collector's Armoury

Alexandria, Virginia

Made famous by the TV series *The Rifleman* and *Wanted Dead or Alive*, the 1892 carbine has the same weight and feel as the real gun but is inexpensive and safe. And yes, the lever action works, so you can spin-cock like Chuck Connors to your heart's content.

Best Old West Rifle Reproduction

Model 1865 Spencer Carbine

Taylor's & Co.

Winchester, Virginia

Taylor's & Co., Inc. and Armi Sport have teamed up to build the best Spencer rifle reproduction on the market today, one offering a smooth action that will stand up to years of use. First produced by Christopher Miner Spencer, the Model 1865 corrected design flaws in Spencer's original 1860 model and gained a solid reputation on the American frontier. **Readers' Choice:** Uberti's 1866 "Yellowboy" Carbine by Benelli USA/Pocomoke, MD

Best Sharps Rifle Manufacturer

C. Sharps Arms Co.

Big Timber, Montana

When you think of 19th-century buffalo hunters, the name Sharps nearly always comes to mind. Big-bore blackpowder rifles, such as the Sharps Model 1874, were the boss gun of the Great Plains. Today, C. Sharps Arms continues that tradition with its new Model 1874 Sharps Boss Gun, which carries with it more than 100 years of tradition. Quality is the reason the registered trademark of C. Sharps continues to be "Old Reliable."

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Shooting/Firearms continued

Best Single Action Army Reproduction

"The Rodeo"

United States Fire Arms Mfg. Co.
Hartford, Connecticut

Made in Hartford, Connecticut, the cradle of the nation's early gun manufacturers, the modern single action army "Rodeo" is historically correct down to its use of a solid firing pin. This revolver makes the Old West a little more accessible to us all. **Readers' Choice:** Cimarron Model 1873 Single Action Army by Cimarron F.A. Co./Fredericksburg, TX

Best Single Action Revolver–Historic

Colt .45 "Peacemaker"

Colt's Patent Fire Arms Mfg. Co.
Hartford, Connecticut

The name Colt is synonymous with the Old West. In fact, we're sure you've heard the axiom "God created man, but Samuel Colt made them equal." This mainstay firearm was so reliable and innovative, a first generation .45 caliber Colt is one of the most collected guns today. *True West's* field editor Phil Spangenberger rated the Peacemaker as #5 on his list of the 50 guns that won the West.

Best Single Action Revolver–Modern

Ruger Bisley Vaquero

Sturm, Ruger & Co.
Southport, Connecticut

This is the ideal revolver for those wanting the Old West look with the safety of Ruger's transfer bar mechanism and loading gate interlock. The SASS-approved Bisley Vaquero is kind to your gun hand, whether chambered in .357 magnum, .45 Colt, .44-40 or—for the Dirty Harry types—.44 magnum.

Best of the West Saloons

Alaska: Red Dog, Juneau
Arizona: Copper Queen Hotel, Bisbee
California: The Crazy Horse, Irvine
Colorado: The Buckhorn Exchange, Denver
Idaho: Casino, Ketchum
Kansas: Long Branch Saloon, Dodge City
Minnesota: Sweeneys Saloon, St. Paul
Montana: Montana Bar, Miles City
Nevada: Mt. Charleston Lodge, Mount Charleston
New Mexico: Cowgirl Bar, Santa Fe
North Dakota: The Iron Horse, Medora
Oregon: Jake's, Portland
South Dakota: Saloon # 10, Deadwood
Texas: White Elephant Saloon, Fort Worth
Wyoming: Million Dollar Cowboy Bar, Jackson

Best Haunted Saloon

Big Nose Kate's Saloon

Tombstone, Arizona

Lots of old saloons say they're haunted. Big Nose Kate's (formerly the Grand Hotel) claims to have regular hauntings witnessed by numerous patrons. Whether they're a dead cowboy or soiled dove, the ghostly occurrences boggle the mind. Aggressive spirits have been known to push unwitting waitresses down the back stairs. It's not a place we'd like to be locked in overnight. **Readers' Choice:** Birdcage Theatre/Tombstone, AZ

Best Historically Accurate Saloon

Irma Hotel

Cody, Wyoming

When Buffalo Bill's Irma Hotel opened in 1902, its most talked about feature was the saloon's cherrywood bar (see p. 98). It was a gift from Queen Victoria of England to show her gratitude for a court performance of the Wild West Show. Even today, the bar remains the hotel's pièce de résistance. **Readers' Choice:** The Crystal Palace/Tombstone, AZ

Best Saloon Frequented by an Old West Icon

The Crystal Palace

Tombstone, Arizona

It doesn't get more authentic than this. The Earps, Doc Holliday and anyone who was anybody regularly drank at the Crystal Palace. It was the place to be seen in old Tombstone. Set 'em up!

Best Western Saloon to Get Smashed In

The Buffalo Chip Saloon

Cave Creek, Arizona

The Buffalo Chip is one of the last truly great cowboy saloons. Patrons regularly ride their horses to the bar for an evening of hard liquor, hot women and great music. This official rodeo bar for the local Fiesta Days Rodeo has been a cowboy watering hole for almost 50 years. **Readers' Choice:** Big Nose Kate's Saloon/Tombstone, AZ

Best of the West Scenic Sites

Best Mountain Range–Large

Wind River Mountains

Wyoming

From history to spectacular scenery, the Wind River Mountains have it all. Jedediah Smith, Bill Sublette, Jim Bridger and a host of other mountain men found the Winds to

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be a beaver paradise. The range's South Pass was the key to the Oregon and California Trails crossing the Continental Divide. And the headwaters of the Seeds-kee-dee—oops, we mean the Green River—are here.

Best Mountain Range—Small

Pioneer Mountains
Idaho

Okay, we'll admit the Pioneer Mountains made the "Best of the West" because our editor has climbed so many of the range's peaks. Produced by Basin and Range faulting—if *True West* were a geology magazine, we'd explain that—the Pioneers are one of several small mountain ranges that surround Sun Valley, Idaho, and make the vacation mecca so spectacular.

Best Old West Trail

Santa Fe Trail

The Oregon Trail may have carried more people, but the Santa Fe Trail is older—by nearly 20 years—having been opened by William Becknell, a merchant-trader, in 1821. Initially running from Franklin, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico, the trail earned its way into the "Best of the West" through its importance to Old West commerce. Soon after the trail opened, freight conveys were carrying upwards of a million dollars a year in Mexican silver and merchandise between Missouri and the Republic of Mexico's northern outpost. **Readers' Choice:** Santa Fe Trail

Best Scenic Road Trip Under 100 Miles

Ketchum, Idaho, to the Stanley Basin

This road trip through South-central Idaho is one of our favorites. From Ketchum, Idaho State Highway 75 heads north (for the most part), following the Big Wood River toward its source near Galena Pass—8,701 feet—where the highway drops into the Stanley Basin, home to the headwaters of the Salmon River, dubbed by William Clark as "The River of No Return." And did we mention alpine peaks? The route snakes between the Boulder, Smoky, White Cloud and Sawtooth Mountains. **Readers' Choice:** Highway 49/California

Best Scenic Road Trip Under 500 Miles

Yosemite National Park to Lone Pine, California

The drive from Yosemite Village alongside the Merced River will have you craning your neck as you attempt to take in the towering granite walls that define Yosemite Valley. Then as you climb along California State Highway 120 to Tuolumne Meadows and Tioga Pass—9,945 feet—you'll wish you'd brought more film for your camera. Once on U.S. 395, heading south toward Lone Pine, you'll think you're in Switzerland as you gaze at the Sierra Nevada Mountains' rugged eastern escarpment. **Readers' Choice:** Beartooth Highway/Near Red Lodge, MT

Miscellaneous

Best Beef Jerky

El Reed 1870s Terlingua Beef Jerky
McKinney, Texas

This stuff's so tasty, our mouths are watering as we write this. The recipe for El Reed's jerky was handed down to Stiles Belcher from his great-grandfather, Texas cattleman and gunfighter Aaron "El" Reed (whose story was published in the Aug. 1976 *True West*).

Best Cowboy China

"Rodeo Pattern" Dinnerware
True West
Royse City, Texas

Serve a meal on these rustic Western place settings or, if you've got the collector's bug, invest in this heirloom-quality china for the future. The Rodeo Westward Ho was the most popular pattern of the Wallace China Company, which produced it in the 1940s-1960s. Its collectible status resulted in the 1990s reproduction of this rodeo set that no Western family's dinner table should be without. And no, we at *True West* magazine don't make it. **Readers' Choice:** True West's "Rodeo Pattern" Dinnerware

Best Desert Critter to Sink Its Fangs Into You

Diamondback Rattlesnake

Last year the gila monster won, but then our readers pointed out that gilas don't have fangs. So, in an effort to be accurate—we are *True West* after all—we thought we'd pick a critter with hypodermic needles for teeth. Fearsome . . . when one of these babies sets to buzzin', octogenarians have been known to jump higher 'n a split-rail fence. **Readers' Choice:** Diamondback Rattlesnake

Best Old West Coffee Company

New Mexico Piñon Coffee
Albuquerque, New Mexico

With its coffee beans carefully roasted in a small-batch roaster, it's no wonder the New Mexico Piñon nut and five-bean blend of Arabica coffee is recognized as unique in 11 countries (including the U.S.). New Mexico's Piñon tree is often called the Manna of the Desert, perhaps because there's an aphrodisiac quality inherent in the nut. **Readers' Choice:** Arbuckles' Coffee

Best Place to Find an Antique Watch

Old Time Antique Pocket Watch
Red Wing, Minnesota

We love this place so much, the *True West* staff got its favorite boss a seven-jewel, circa 1918 Waltham from here. (If you ever meet Bob Boze Bell, be sure to ask him for the time.) Re-enactors, SASS and CMSA members often purchase Old West-era pocket watches, not only to add to their costumes' authenticity, but also to own a genuine piece of history.

Best Rocky Mountain Oysters—Bulls 'n' Beyond

Rock Creek Lodge
Near Clinton, Montana

Hispanic cowboy at Texas' King Ranch asks a *Boys' Life* reporter while throwing

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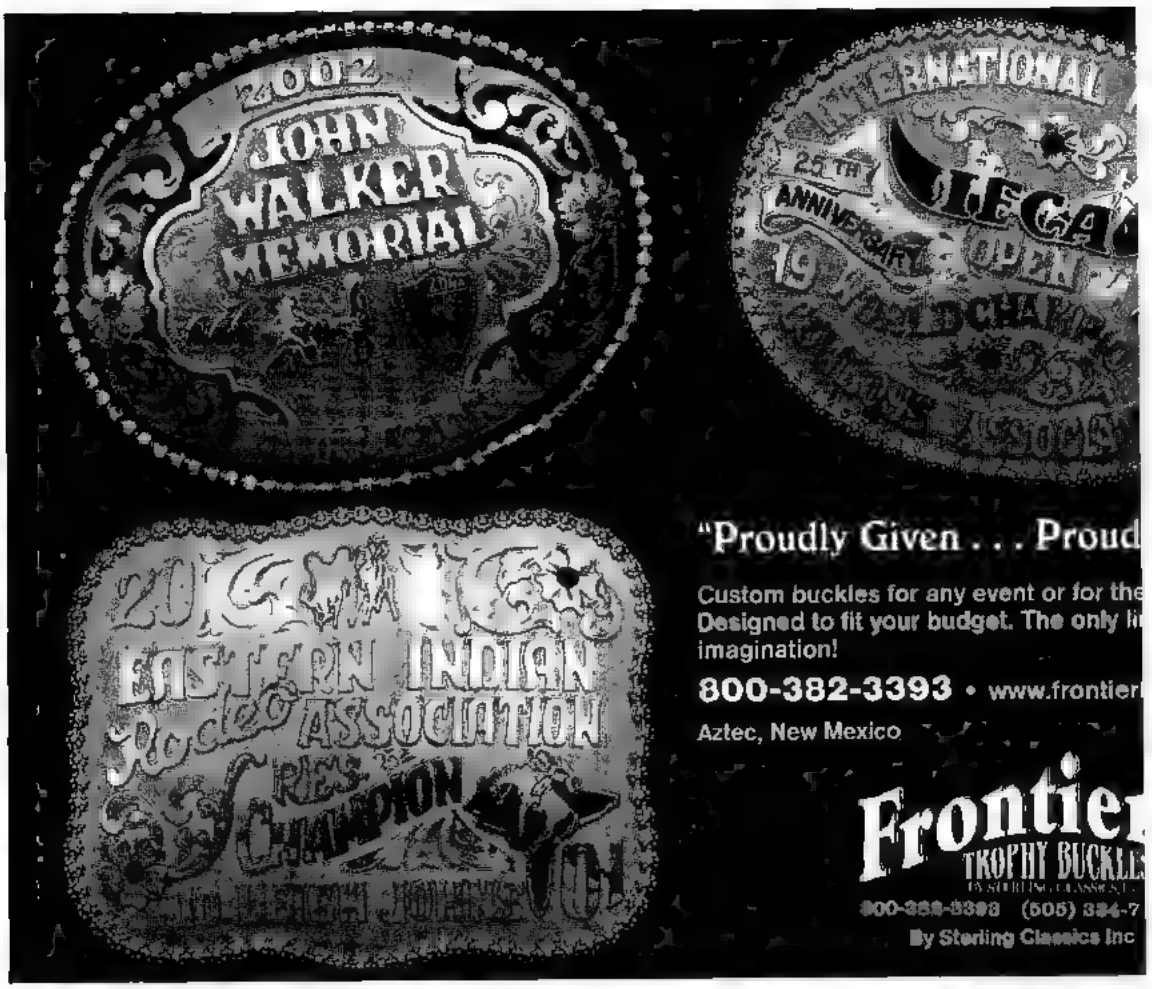
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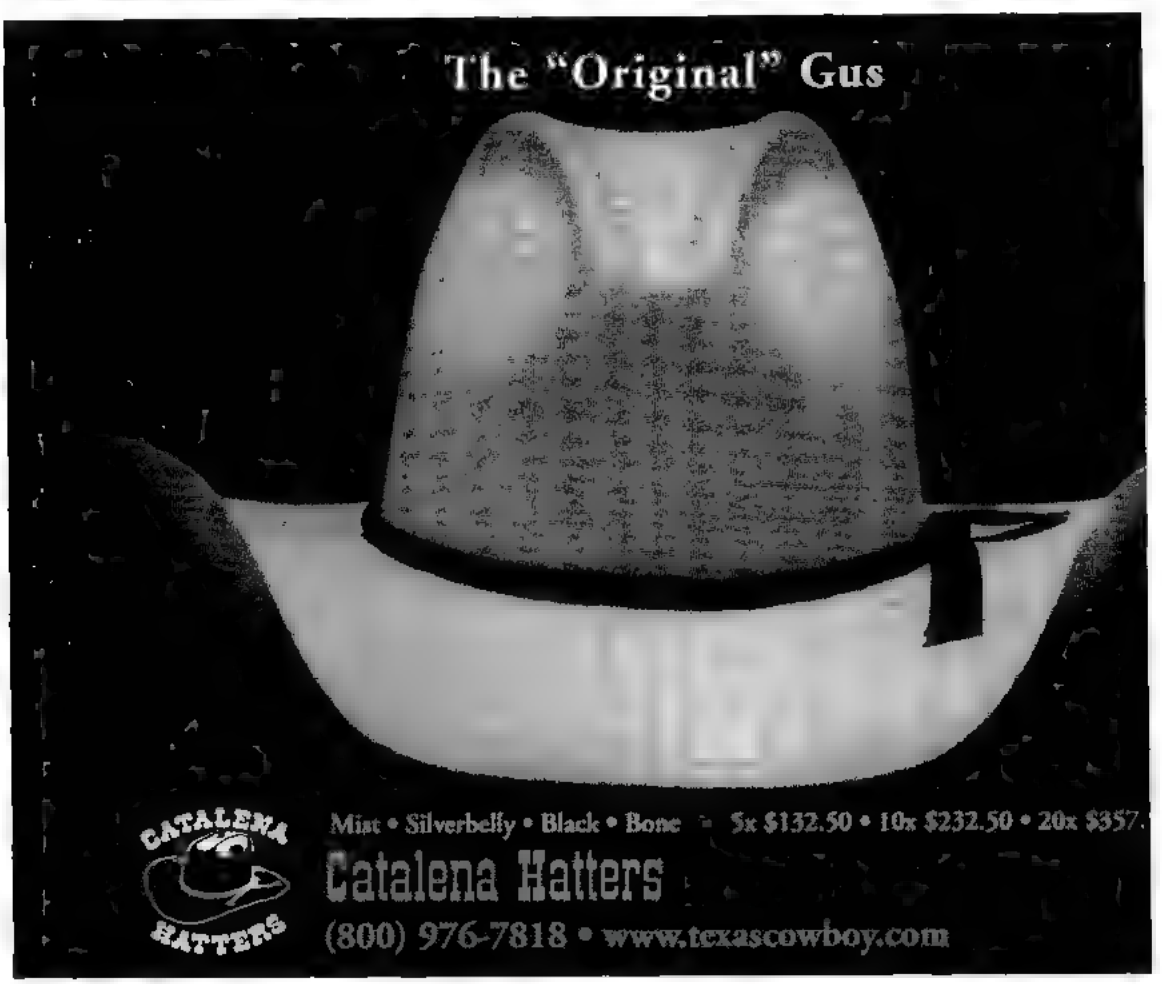
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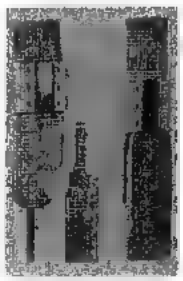

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Miscellaneous continued

certain body parts of unfortunate male cattle into a Hefty bag: "You ever try a Rocky Mountain oyster?" *Boys' Life* reporter: "Uh, no." Cowboy: "Man, that's the best eating in the world." *Boys' Life* reporter: "I'll take your word for it." Rock Creek Lodge's Testicle Festival allows over 15,000 visitors to gobble up 1.5 tons of the aforementioned delicacy. **Readers' Choice:** Proud Cut Saloon/Cody, WY

Best Western Action Figure

Mark Twain Caricature Figurine

Dog Soldiers

Alexandria, Virginia

Although Dog Soldiers specializes in authentic American Indian 12-inch action figures, the whimsical five-inch Mark Twain caricature figurine is our favorite. They also have other figures for the kid in you, including a Chiricahua Apache War Leader and an 1870s Buffalo Soldier. **Readers' Choice:** Johnny West by Marx Toys/Sebring, OH

Best Western Auction

Greg Martin Auctions

San Francisco, California

Greg Martin Auctions—started in 2002 by three former members of Butterfields Auctions—offers over a century of combined auction and appraisal experience. The firm specializes in weapons, armor and historic memorabilia, and recently sold a Colt Model 1849 pocket revolver for a $740,000 bid. **Readers' Choice: (Tie)** Brian Lebel's Annual Cody Old West Show & Auction/Cody, WY and Little John's Auction Service/Orange, CA

Best Western Mythical Creature

Bigfoot

Last fall, Dr. Jane Goodall announced on NPR that Bigfoot exists because Native Americans mention the same sounds when describing him, and London's Natural History Museum couldn't identify what British scientists believe to be a Bigfoot hair. (To her credit, Goodall did admit that it's the romantic in her that wants to believe.) **Readers' Choice:** Jackalope

Best Wyatt Earp Collectible

Gold Plated 1873 Colt .45 Revolver

Investment Arms

Fort Collins, Colorado

The first in their gunfighter series, this is truly a work of art. The heirloom piece is layered in 24-karat gold and nickel silver, with walnut laser-carved grips and the images of Wyatt and the men who fought beside him near the O.K. Corral. Now if Wyatt Earp had been packing a gold plated hogleg in 1881, he and the McLaurys may really have had something to fight about.

Best Indian War Chief

Geronimo

Geronimo did it all. He was tough, shrewd, a survivor of many ambushes and once outran (on foot) a mounted Mexican militia all the way back to his home in Arizona. Late in his career, he led almost the entire U.S. Army on a wild goose chase all over Mexico and never was captured. True, he surrendered on four different occasions, but it was always on his terms. **Readers' Choice:** Crazy Horse

Best Mountain Man

John Colter

He scouted the Louisiana Purchase and Pacific Northwest with Lewis and Clark. He trapped the headwaters of the Missouri River. He's credited with being the first white man to see the geysers of Yellowstone National Park. He outran the Blackfeet in a race for his life. And unlike some other famous mountain men, John Colter died at home in bed—of jaundice. **Readers' Choice:** Jim Bridger

Best Old West Lawman

Wild Bill Hickok

Wild Bill Hickok pinned on the star and held his own in hellholes such as Hays City, Wichita and Abilene. These towns were as rough as they come and Hickok handled them all with style, aplomb and an even hand. Our hats are way off to you Bill (even though your name was James). **Readers' Choice:** Wyatt Earp

Best Outlaw—Female

Bonnie Parker

When it comes to brazen outlaw achievement, we have to go with the roughest, meanest, lawdog-killer of the West—the one, the only, Bonnie Parker of Bonnie & Clyde fame. Where others talked, Bonnie killed and robbed and was just as nasty as any of the men in her gang. And she went out in a blaze of bullets. Cars or no cars, thus was one bad outlaw girl. **Readers' Choice:** Belle Starr

Best Outlaw—Male

Butch Cassidy

If you count the number of his killings, John Wesley Hardin takes the prize, hands down. If you tally the robberies and deeds of derring-do, Jesse James is numero uno. But when you factor style, staying power, sheer bravery and imagination, Butch Cassidy is The Man. **Readers' Choice:** Billy the Kid

Best Western Gambler

Doc Holliday

When it comes to the Knights of the Green Cloth, it's impossible to get past the most famous gambler from Georgia—John Henry Holliday. True, there may have been gamblers who were better card players (Tombstone's Dick Clark) and card sharps who lasted longer (Wyatt Earp), but the deadly Southern dentist casts a wide shadow for such a skinny little lunger. (Of course, we wouldn't dare say that to his face!) **Readers' Choice:** Doc Holliday

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TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

BEST BUFFALO HUNT

SCENIC MESA RANCH
HOTCHKISS, COLORADO

We're not talking smokeless powder, scoped rifles and penned-up buffalo. When we say "Old West buffalo hunt," we mean just that. And that's what head guide Dan Deuter offers. If you're good enough, Dan will allow you to hunt from horseback, wearing period clothing and shooting a blackpowder rifle with iron sights. The only thing closer to the Old West would be using a Sioux-made, compound bow and arrows. **Readers' Choice:** Hawes Ranch/Ford, KS

BEST CLIFF DWELLING

CLIFF PALACE
MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO

Cliff Palace is still home to secrets archaeologists have yet to unravel, such as why the Anasazi lived here for only about 100 years before migrating south. During the Cliff Palace tour, you'll descend approximately 100 feet and get a close-up view of the park's largest cliff dwelling—a 288-foot complex of 151 rooms and 23 kivas where about 150 people lived at any one time from A.D. 1190 to 1280. But plan your trip accordingly, Cliff Palace is open only from mid-April through October.

BEST DESERT ZOO

SONORAN DESERT MUSEUM
TUCSON, ARIZONA

No, the winner isn't the Phoenix freeways during rush hour, although that was a close second. You won't see javelinas, hummingbirds, chuckwallas and harvester ants running around on the freeway's new rubberized asphalt, but you will see them in this lush Sonoran desert zoo, which has been voted "the most distinctive zoo in the United States." **Readers' Choice:** Sonoran Desert Museum

BEST HAUNTED HISTORIC SITE

BIRD CAGE THEATRE
TOMBSTONE, ARIZONA

"They look like birds in a cage . . . they haven't got a chance," songwriter Arthur J. Lamb remarked in the 1880s, while watching the ladies in the cribs plying for male attention. One famous haunt occurred inside a crib frequented by the Clantons. For six months after a statue of Wyatt Earp was placed there, the statue's hat was continually thrown into the casino. After the statue was moved to the crib Wyatt frequented, the activity ceased. Some feuds never die.

BEST HISTORICAL FORT

FORT LARNED
LARNED, KANSAS

The Fort Larned National Historic Site, located on the Santa Fe Trail, contains nine original buildings, which have been restored to look like they did when the military post was charged with protecting emigrant and freight traffic on the Kansas plains.

BEST INDIAN POW-WOW

RED EARTH FESTIVAL
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Conceived in 1986, this annual summer festival preserves Native American culture by bringing in dancers, drummers, singers and artists from more than 100 Indian tribes. The color of the Indian costumes . . . the drum beat . . . the art . . . the excitement . . . the food. It's everything a John Wayne movie isn't. **Readers' Choice:** Red Earth Festival

BEST LOST MINE

LOST DUTCHMAN
SOMEWHERE IN ARIZONA

You're likely to come home with a sunburn and not a pot of gold when you climb the Superstition Mountains in search of this misplaced mine. The Deutsche Man, Jacob Waltz, moved to Phoenix in the 1870s and never revealed the location of the gold ore he sometimes used to purchase goods. After his homestead was flooded in February 1891, Waltz supposedly told the secret of the mine's location to his friend, Julia Thomas. No one's hit pay dirt since Waltz (if he ever really did). **Readers' Choice:** Lost Dutchman

BEST ROADSIDE ATTRACTION

WALL DRUG
WALL, SOUTH DAKOTA

Yes, we know it won last year, but if you haven't been to Wall Drug, then you've led a sheltered life. This tourist stop on the Dakota prairie knows more about advertising and promotion than Madison Avenue. We doubt if anyone can tell us how many billboards have been erected along America's roadways touting Wall Drug's free ice water. Whoever said all roads lead to Rome was wrong. All roads lead to Wall Drug. **Readers' Choice:** Wall Drug

BEST RODEO—NATIONAL

CHEYENNE FRONTIER DAYS
CHEYENNE, WYOMING

The rodeo called "The daddy of 'em all" began in 1897 when a representative of the Union Pacific Railroad persuaded towns along its tracks to host a fair or celebration to entice travelers. The following year, Buffalo Bill brought his Wild West Show to Cheyenne, to the delight of 6,000 spectators. And Cheyenne has never looked back. Today, the annual July rodeo showcases every event from bull dogging to bull riding.

BEST RODEO—REGIONAL

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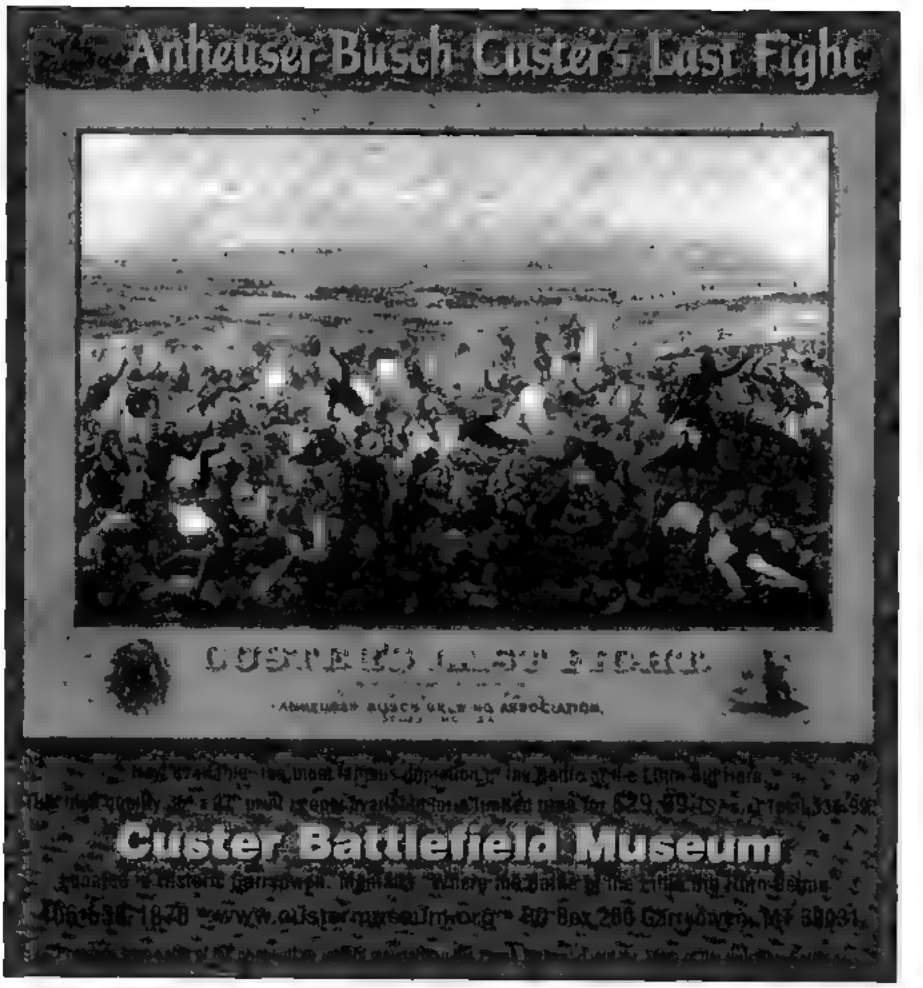

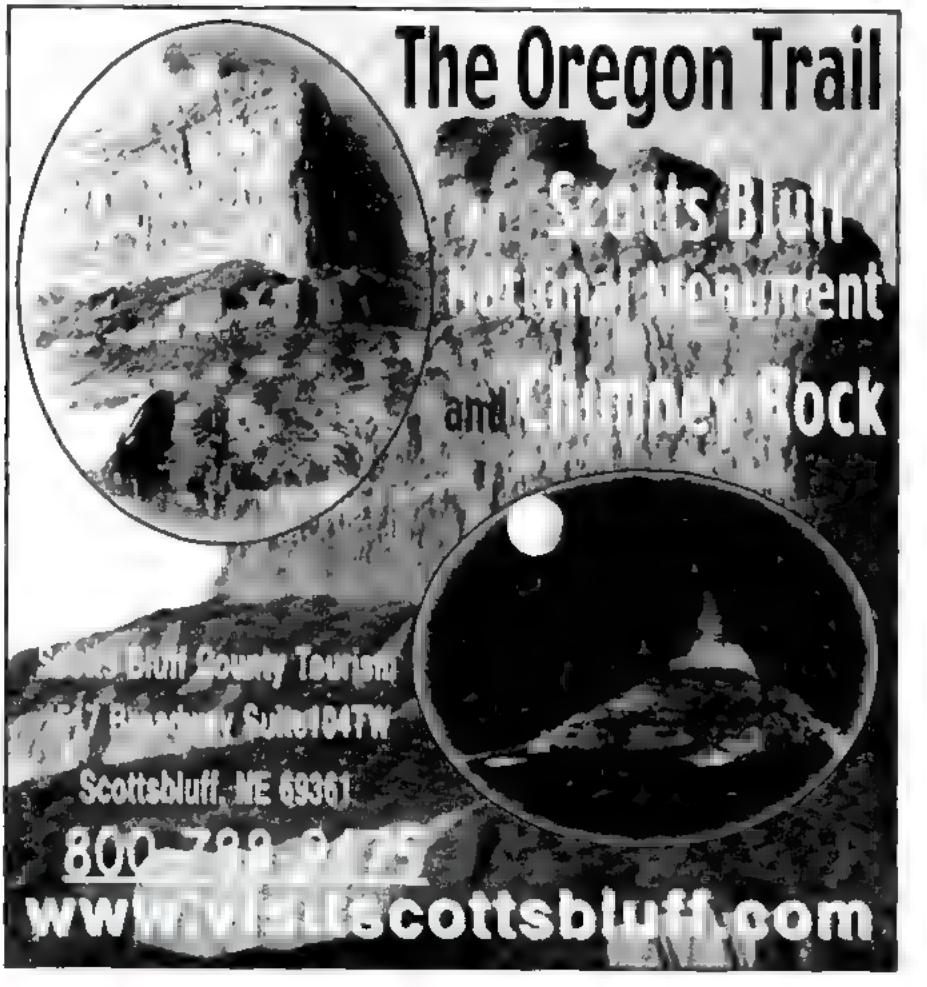

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Tourist Attractions continued

stagecoach travel—and he'll also provide a little biased history about Lincoln County, Fort Sumner and Billy the Kid's other stomping grounds. The Lincoln County Overland Stage Co. offers a 90-minute, 5½-mile ride over the Ozanne Trail. You won't go as fast as in the Richard Petty Driving School, but it's fun and educational. **Readers' Choice:** Knott's Berry Farm/Buena Vista, CA

Best Wagon Train Experience

Teton Wagon Train Adventures

Jackson, Wyoming

Genuine wagon trains take you through the Teton Mountains past high meadows, beautiful streams and clear lakes. There's plenty of cowboy entertainment and all the Dutch oven chow you can eat. And if you're lucky, you may even see a moose.

Best Western Festival

Festival of the West

Scottsdale, Arizona

Every year, over 70,000 people converge at the annual Festival of the West for a taste of all things Western. With its Western art, food, crafts, concerts, celebrities, mounted shooting events and chuck wagon grub, this is one hoppin' event. And if you've never visited Scottsdale in the late winter, do yourself a favor and try it. **Readers' Choice:** Festival of the West

Best Western Riverboat Cruise

Columbia River Cruise

American West Steamboat Co.

Seattle, Washington

This seven-night, 1,000-mile cruise aboard a sternwheel riverboat up the Columbia and Snake Rivers is steeped in history. The route follows much of that taken by Lewis and Clark, and it parallels the Western portion of the Oregon Trail. Activities include talks by the on-board historian, stops at scenic and historical sites and nightly entertainment. And did we mention food? Bring your appetite, you'll need it. **Readers' Choice:** Liberty Belle Riverboat at Walt Disney World/Orlando, FL

Best Western Train Ride

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

Durango, Colorado

The beauty of the San Juan Mountains is best seen from a turn-of-the-century rail coach or parlor car. The splendor of spring or the serenity of winter as seen along the 26-mile excursion between Durango and Silverton, Colorado, will have you hooked on this historical steam-driven adventure. **Reader's Choice:** Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

Best Wild West Show

Great American Wild West Show

Drasco, Arkansas

You've read our 50 Western Legends, but what do you know of the legends that unfolded at this year's Wild West Show? Did you see Pistol Packin' Paula spinning her nickel-plated Colt 45s and cracking her two eight-foot bull whips at over 750 miles per hour? Or stunt rider Max Reynolds revamping his Buffalo Bill role from *Buffalo Girls*? What about the six-horse stagecoach holdup? Come on . . . you at least saw the dance hall girls? If you haven't said yes to any of these, snatch yourself a ticket. And soon.

Best Wild West Towns

Angels Camp, California: When someone points you to Jackass Hill, you know you've hit a wild town. Mark Twain stayed here at his friend James Gillis' cabin. Then he'd head over to the Angels Hotel, where he first heard how miners passed their time—gambling on frog races. The wagers often cost a losing miner an arm and a leg. Of course, frauds were commonplace, and many a loser's frog was discovered to be full of buckshot long after the winner had left. But if you have a hankering for some weird, wild fun, come in May for the Jumping Frog Jubilee.

Austin, Texas: Home to Austin City Limits, Sixth Street, Driskill Hotel, LBJ Library and Museum, O. Henry's home, intoxicated UT coeds, Texas Tradition cowboy boots and the $80 million Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. Ted Koppel has called it "the last liberal bastion in Texas," which means it's just as wild as it was when Rip Ford and Sam Houston hung their hats here.

Cody, Wyoming: Tourists waking up in Cody won't think they're in Des Moines. Buffalo Bill Cody imbued his Wild West spirit into this town he founded in 1896, and it's still here today. From rodeo—Cody calls itself the "rodeo capital of the world"—to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center to the saloon in the Irma Hotel, the town's Western roots are sunk deep in the Wyoming soil. Perhaps Cody isn't as wild as it was when Buffalo Bill was here, but it comes close.

Deadwood, South Dakota: Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane may be gone, but their memory is alive and prospering. Capitalizing on its colorful past, Deadwood does everything it can to maintain its Old West image. Elsewhere in South Dakota's Black Hills the highwaymen may have disappeared, but not so in Deadwood. Local businessmen employ an army of bandits—albeit the one-armed kind—to ensure the town remains true to its gambling roots.

"If you're riding ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's there."

- Will Rogers

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DODGE CITY, KANSAS: As far as "wild" goes, modern Dodge City can't hold a candle to its predecessor, rightly called "Queen of the Cow Towns." But if you visit Front Street on Saturday night, you'll get a bit of the town's Old West flavor. And if you're hankering for the real treatment, just walk in a restaurant and order rack of lamb. This is still a cattle town—mosey downwind from the feedlots and you'll get the drift—and folks don't cotton much to sheep.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLORADO: We all know that Doc Holliday died here in the Hotel Glenwood on November 8, 1887, though by the time he arrived in town, Doc's wild nature had been subdued by tuberculosis. Yet, even without Doc, Glenwood Springs has always been one "hot" town. In case you think we're referring to the hot springs that put the town on the map, we're not. Throughout its history, Glenwood Springs has had so many fires, it's a wonder the town's still standing.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA: If you want to see the modern Wild West, visit Lincoln on a Saturday night after the University of Nebraska has walloped Oklahoma or Texas. When Cornhuskers speak of shoot-outs, they're talking about the ones that use pigskins, not hoglegs.

MCCALL, IDAHO: Okay, we'll admit that McCall isn't as wild as it used to be. Ever since the town bars stopped allowing their patrons to wear firearms while they drank, things have quieted down a smidgen. Today, McCall locals court outsiders—they call 'em tourists—instead of shooting them.

MEDORA, NORTH DAKOTA: We figure any town that lists its ordinances on its official website—17 of them—either has to be wild or seeks to ensure that it never gets that way again. Still, if you want to visit Medora when it's at its wildest, try coming in January during a blizzard.

MILES CITY, MONTANA: Gen. Nelson A. Miles' ban on alcohol didn't keep his soldiers from seeking out the liquor and ladies in brothels and saloons. In 1881, a thousand bottles of beer a day were consumed in Miles City's 42 saloons. Although today the town is more respectable, we're certain you'll find a few saloons where you can live it up.

NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA: Ever since the James boys and Youngers shot up Northfield on September 7, 1876, the town has been trying to live up to its wild past. It comes close the first weekend after each Labor Day when locals stage the "last battle of the Civil War," re-enacting the famous raid on the First National Bank. If you want to see an event where the outcome is unknown, take in a tractor pull.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA: We have a thing for cow towns, so we'll admit that cattle got Oklahoma City on this list. The town's historic Stockyards City hosts the world's largest cattle auction. And if steer auctions are too tame for you, then head over to Club Rodeo and climb aboard one of the bulls for the longest eight seconds of your life.

PENDLETON, OREGON: Contrary to what you may think, Pendleton is not a sheepish town, despite the city fathers touting the Pendleton Woolen Mills as a prime tourist attraction. Pendleton knows how to party, especially each September when it hosts the Pendleton Round-Up, a rodeo institution. Besides, any town that would feature booze (Pendleton Canadian Whisky—British English spelling, no "e") on its official website has to be wild.

PRESCOTT, ARIZONA: If you want to know how wild Prescott is without going there, rent a copy of *Junior Bonner*. The film may be fiction, but the town's Whiskey Row—Montezuma Street—isn't. A hundred years ago, the district sported 40 saloons. Today there aren't that many, so you'll be safe enough bringing your spouse and kids. Altercations still break out occasionally, but they're more often between tourists fighting over scarce parking places.

RUIDOSO, NEW MEXICO: This Lincoln County haunt of Billy the Kid witnessed so many wild times during the late 19th century that some of the wild just naturally percolated down to today. If gambling fits your definition of wild, Ruidoso offers the Billy the Kid Casino.

. . . , UTAH: We know Utah has Western towns—it's west of the Continental Divide, after all—but wild? We're afraid not. But that's probably just a ploy on the part of Utah officials to get you into the backcountry where the land is not only wild but also scenic.

WINNEMUCCA, NEVADA: You know a town's got to be wild if it takes a perfectly good motorcycle and sets it ablaze just for fun. That's what Winnemuccans do every May during their four-day motorcycle rally. Of course, Winnemucca is in Nevada, so for a really wild time, try your luck with the galloping dominos—craps for the uninitiated—at one of the town's casinos.

BEST MINING TOWN

SILVER CITY, NEW MEXICO

Despite the ups and downs of the copper-mining industry, Silver City keeps booming. It offers a thriving art community, tons of history, a blues festival, pro rodeo, even a strong film society. Plus, it has been voted one of the Best Small Towns in America and one of the Healthiest Places to Live and Retire in the United States. No wonder Billy's mom moved here in the 1870s. **Readers' Choice:** Virginia City, NV

BEST WESTERN TOWN IN NEED OF A NAME CHANGE

BAGDAD, ARIZONA

First off, don't fire up your e-mail to tell us we misspelled "Bagdad." We didn't. Maybe the Iraqis felt compelled to put an "h" in their city's name, but Arizonians didn't. Still Bagdad, Arizona, is close enough to Baghdad, Iraq, for us to suggest a name change, especially in light of our recent dustup. After all, what American town wants to be named for a loser?

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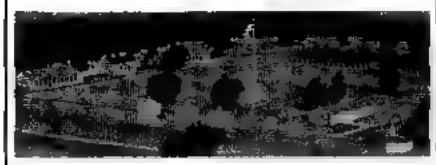

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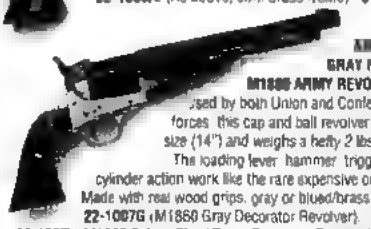
22-1063/A (As above, sim. brass frame) **$70** PPD



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22-1067G (M1860 Gray Decorator Revolver). **$67**
22-1067L (M1860 Deluxe Blued/Brass Decorator Revolver). **$72**

1873 Cavalry Pistol
Cock the hammer, spin the cylinder. 7" barrel. Length: 13". Wt: 2.2 lbs. Wood grips, in antique gray or simulated nickel frame.
22-1191/G (Antique gray) **$67** PPD
22-1191/N (As above, sim. nickel frame). **$72** PPD

1873 "Peacemaker"
Classic .45 revolver with wood grips and working action. 4.75" barrel. Length: 11.5". Wt: 2 lbs.
22-1186/G (Antique gray) ... **$66** PPD
22-1186/N (As above, sim. nickel frame). **$72** PPD

Derringer Infamous "twin shot" hideaway "favorite of dandies" and gamblers. Engraved bright gold color, sim. pearl grips, working action. Length: 4.5", Wt: 1 lb.
22-1203 (Decorator Derringer) **$39** PPD

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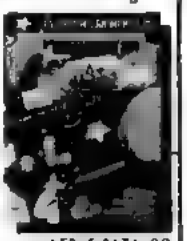

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Best of the West Lodging

Best Haunted Hotel

Gadsden Hotel

Douglas, Arizona

Built in 1907, this historic hotel boasts marble pillars and Tiffany stained glass windows. The hotel is so wonderful, a few of the guests have chosen never to leave. Strange ghostly happenings occur on a regular basis when the sun sets on this Arizona treasure. **Readers' Choice:** St. James Hotel/Cimarron, New Mexico

Best Historic Western Hotels

Arizona

Hassayampa, Prescott

Colorado

Brown Palace, Denver

Kansas

Eldridge, Lawrence

Montana

Grand Union Hotel, Fort Benton

Nevada

Grand Hill Hotel, Virginia City

New Mexico

St. James Hotel, Cimarron

Oregon

Governor Hotel, Portland

South Dakota

Bullock, Deadwood

Texas

Driskill Hotel, Austin

Wyoming

Irma Hotel, Cody

Best of the West Historical Sites

Alamo

San Antonio, Texas

We don't want future generations to have to "remember the Alamo," but some pesky termites certainly have taken a chunk out of this great site. Fortunately, most of the structure is stone, and a state-of-the-art termite extermination system promises to kill the rest of these wood addicts. In the meantime, wise men say to move up your trip to visit the Alamo.

Cochise Stronghold

Coronado National Forest

Near Sunsites, Arizona

These towering rock pinnacles proved a natural fortress for the Chiricahua Apache Cochise and his tribe. When he died in 1874, Cochise was supposedly buried in or around this impregnable fortress. If you find the grave, be sure to let us know.

Fort Laramie

Fort Laramie, Wyoming

No walled fortifications? What kind of frontier fort is this? The kind Oregon Trail pioneers were glad to reach since it was the last stop for a long time for supplies, medicine and news. Although half of the fort is gone, what remains is well-preserved.

Fort Snelling

St. Paul, Minnesota

Grab a copy of the *Old Fort Snelling Instruction Book for Fife* and play some spirited 19th-century tunes when you walk through the gates of Minnesota's oldest military center. That frontier spirit is just what fort re-enactors encourage as they whisk you back to 1827, where you can learn how to make frontier toothpaste. (Charcoal and salt . . . it's a wonder people even had teeth back then.)

Golden Spike

Promontory Summit, Utah

"May God continue the unity of our country, as the Railroad unites the two great Oceans of the World." Thus read side four of the spike symbolically tapped into the track's laurel tie on May 10, 1869. Today, replicas of the Central Pacific's Jupiter and the Union Pacific's 119 steam locomotives reunite at this national historic site.

Jesse James Farm & Museum

Kearney, Missouri

This has been one heck of a year for the birthplace of Jesse James. With the Jesse movie matinee in March and a James Gang gun exhibit on loan from collector Ralph Ganis through October of this year, the museum has been doing its part to spice up this historical landmark.

Little Bighorn Battlefield

Near Crow Agency, Montana

Once known as Custer Battlefield, this site where Custer went wrong changed its name in 1991. Even though the battle is still commonly referred to as Custer's Last Stand, the monument shows you how it can also be Sitting Bull's Last Stand. Despite the Indians

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saying bully to the general, they were still herded onto government reservations.

O.K. Corral

Tombstone, Arizona

The life-size replicas may seem tacky, but people want to know where those famous gunfighters stood. If you squint, you can picture them blasting away. (The hot sun may help you squint.) For those who prefer their eyes wide open, walk a few more steps and watch the gunfight re-enactment.

Scotts Bluff

Scottsbluff/Gering, Nebraska

After the flat, drab Platte scenery, is it any wonder that Oregon Trail emigrants were astonished by Scotts Bluff? Typical of many diary entries is Alonzo Delano's poetic description in 1849: "It seemed as if the wand of a magician had passed over a city, and like that in Arabian Nights, had converted all living things to stone."

Sutter's Fort

Sacramento, California

This temporary refuge was Sacramento's earliest settlement and the destination point for California emigrants. And where do you think the rescuers for the Donner Party came from? Why, this fort of course! Due to an 1847 map published in Damstadt, Germany, this reconstructed fort looks just like it did before gold seekers overran Sutter's properties.

Internet

Best Old West Website

BestOfWesternRadio.com

"It's a chancy job and it makes a man watchful and a little lonely," was the end of the announcement to the first adult Western radio show, *Gunsmoke*. Listen to *Gunsmoke's* first show, "Billy the Kid" (among others), or tune in to other Western radio programs, such as *Frontier Gentleman* and *The Six Shooter*. **Readers' Choice:** www.TrueWestMagazine.com

Best Western Movie Website

ClassicWesterns.com

Amazon.com has hooked up with ClassicWesterns.com to make purchasing your favorite Western films as easy as possible. With Amazon's handy synopsis, you can familiarize yourself with new Westerns as well as old-time favorites. **Readers' Choice:** www.IMDB.com

Best Old West Computer Game

Outlaws by LucasArts

Ex-marshal James Anderson has a hankerin' for revenge after his farm is plowed under to make way for the railroad. *Outlaws'* muted earth backgrounds recall the classic '60s Westerns, and its replay value is rich because it has three game variations. One variation includes multiplayer mode, which allows for each player's character to have his or her own unique fighting style. Get your trigger finger limber and download a demo from http://www.lucasarts.com/products/outlaws/

Best Western Computer Game

Oregon Trail (5th Edition) by The Learning Company

Geared toward young cowpokes in grades four-eight, this Westward trail comes to life through the history-based journal entries of the fictional Montgomery family. Some of the challenges faced along the trail include health complications, supply problems and route decisions. This first-hand understanding of wagon train families will encourage your children to research and write about their own experiences.

Museums

Best Western Museums

Arizona: Desert Caballeros, Wickenburg
California: Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles
Colorado: Black American West Museum, Denver
Idaho: National Oregon-California Trail Museum, Montpelier
Kansas: Old Cowtown Museum, Wichita
Minnesota: Minnesota History Center, St. Paul
Missouri: Jesse James Farm & Museum, Kearney
Montana: Custer Battlefield Museum, Garryowen
Nebraska: Harold Warp Pioneer Village, Minden
Nevada: Nevada State Museum, Carson City
New Mexico: Hubbard Museum, Ruidoso Downs
North Dakota: Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Washburn
Oklahoma: National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City
Oregon: High Desert Museum, Bend
South Dakota: Journey Museum, Rapid City
Texas: Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, Waco
Utah: Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City
Washington: Fort Nisqually, Tacoma
Wyoming: Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody

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Museums continued

Best Branding Iron Museum

National Ranching Heritage Center

Lubbock, Texas

A rancher's brand is "the heraldry of the range," according to West Texas chronicler J. Evetts Haley. In 2000, the NRHC began collecting historical and contemporary branding irons for its permanent exhibit, *Irons from the Fire*, and now has over 100 branding irons.

Best Brothel Museum

Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum

San Angelo, Texas

This bawdy house was a landmark of the dubious kind from the time ladies started entertaining gentlemen callers in the mid-1800s until the Texas Rangers (the law-enforcement officers, not the major league baseball team) shut it down in 1946. Miss Hattie's Museum gives visitors a G-rated look at life in a Texas bordello. **Readers' Choice:** Birdcage Theatre/Tombstone, AZ

Best Cowboy Museum

Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame and Museum of the American Cowboy

Colorado Springs, Colorado

This is the only heritage center in the world devoted to America's original sport—the rodeo. The best of the Old West is preserved in Heritage Hall, which is chock-full of historical rodeo gear. **Readers' Choice:** Cowboy Hall of Fame/Oklahoma City, OK

Best Cowgirl Museum

National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame

Fort Worth, Texas

The cowgirl spirit thrives in this beautiful, action-packed, interactive, awe-inspiring, new museum that celebrates the courage and determination of Western women. Its centerpiece is the Hall of Fame, honoring over 160 artists, writers, businesswomen, educators, ranchers and rodeo cowgirls. **Readers' Choice:** National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame

Western Artisans

Best Antique Stove Restorer

Stove Black Richardson

Good Time Stove Co.

Somewhere in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts

Stove Black—cross our hearts, we're not making up his name—believes in the quality and craftsmanship of yesterday's stoves and ovens and has devoted his life to restoring them to their original luster and function. Stove Black's daughter Sara is the Stove Princess. **Readers' Choice:** Don Williamson/Rapid City, SD

Best Bootjack Maker

Charlie Crawford

Crawford & Co.

Uvalde, Texas

If you want a lift, stick out your thumb. Maybe a passing car will give you a ride. But if you want to pull off a pair of cowboy boots that you've been wearing all day, you'd better grab one of Charlie Crawford's bootjacks. Charlie has been making handcrafted bootjacks since 1983, individually sand-casting each base from iron, aluminum or bronze. **Readers' Choice:** Crawford & Co.

Best Bootmaker-Working Cowboy

Blucher Boot Co.

Beggs, Oklahoma

Since the company's founding by Gus Blucher in 1915, Bluchers has never lost sight of its most important—and most demanding—customer: the American cowboy. Blucher boots are handmade, comfortable and guaranteed to "never lose a stirrup." **Readers' Choice:** Olathe/Mercedes, TX

Best Bootmaker—Traditional

Stewart Boots

Tucson, Arizona

Stewart boots are economical and comfortable. Our editor has owned two pairs and swears by them. Stewart also sells to Burt Reynolds, Pat Benatar, Clint Eastwood and even provided the boots for the movie *City Slickers*. **Readers' Choice:** Olathe/Mercedes, TX

Best Bootmaker—Comfort

Ariat International

Union City, California

We haven't found any other boot that out of the box feels like you've been wearing 'em for years. All the fancy stuff Ariat uses in its soles is an example of what happens when you blend technology with tradition. And all this from a company that shipped its first pair of boots in 1993. **Readers' Choice:** Tony Llama/Fort Worth, TX

Best Gun Leather Artisan—Historical

El Paso Saddlery

El Paso, Texas

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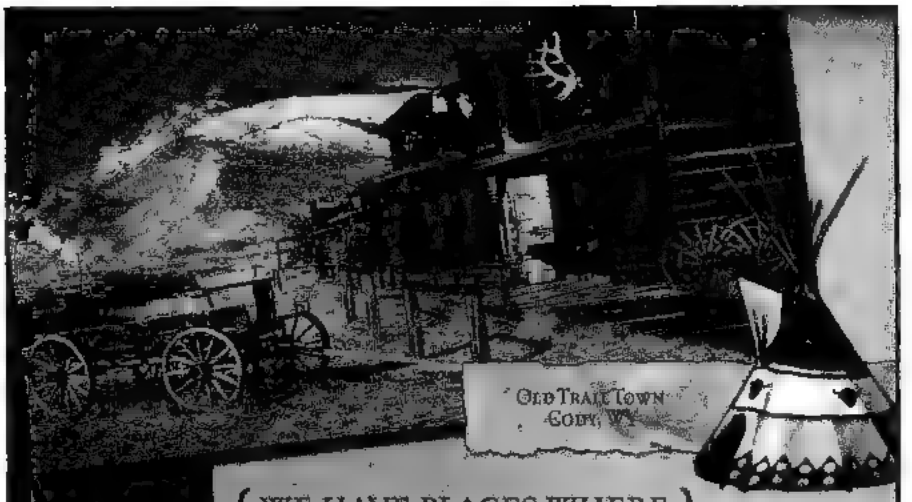

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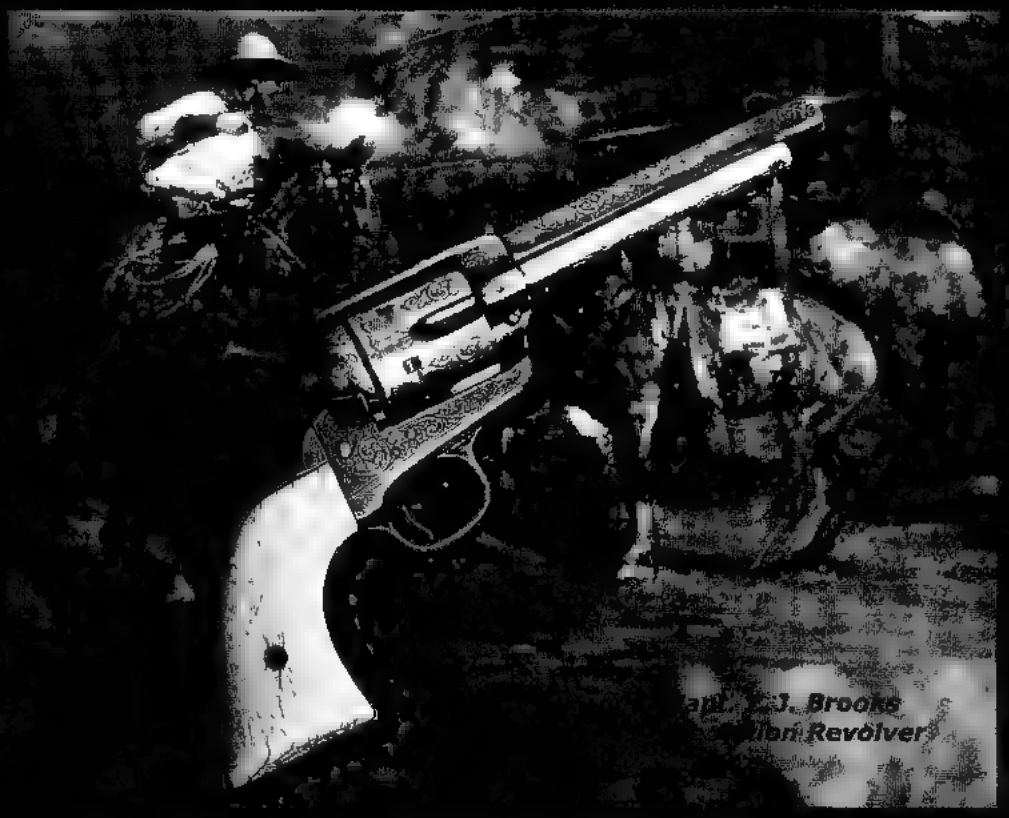

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Western Artisans continued

Best Gun Leather Artisan–Reproduction

Wm. Brown Holster Co.

Tombstone, Arizona

Wm. Brown's speciality is handcrafted, 1800s-style gun holsters. Located across from the O.K. Corral, these craftsmen turn out quality rigs. Our favorite is the Curly Bill Brocius holster set, like the one worn by Powers Booth in the movie *Tombstone*.

Best Hat Maker

Catalena Hatters

Bryan, Texas

In business for over 20 years and selling hats worldwide, this family operation was the first hat maker to sell the "Gus" crease hat inspired by the movie *Lonesome Dove*. Each hat is hand-creased and hand-fitted to each oval and size. Catalena hats will make you look good even if you start renting pigs.

Best Hat Maker–Celebrity

Tom Hirt

Penrose, Colorado

We again tip our hat to Tom Hirt, whose advice includes: roan or goat leather make the best sweatbands; the best hat fur is beaver; and the best care for your hat is to wipe it with a damp towel every day in a counter-clockwise direction.

Best Historical Hat

Stetson

Ever since John B. Stetson put some beaver felt over a hat block, Stetson hats have been a part of the Old West. For a true piece of history, we'll go with a Stetson. **Readers' Choice:** D Bar J/Las Vegas, NV

Best Knife Maker

Cowboy Bob Giles

Cowboy Bob's Frontier Trappings
Whitefish, Montana

Bob makes his 1800s-era knives from recycled sawmill blades. Each knife has a tapered tang and a wide blade for perfect balance. His handles are made of elk and deer antler, buffalo and cow horn, stag, bone ebony and mastodon ivory. **Readers' Choice:** Buck Knives/El Cajon, CA

Best Saddle Maker–Period

Sawtooth Saddle Co.

Vernal, Utah

Sawtooth Saddles are handmade from the tree up. Ride all day, work cattle, compete in mounted shooting or just take pride in owning one. You'll be sure to hand this saddle down to your son or daughter. **Reader's Choice:** Marc Oliver Saddlery/Fort Collins, CO

Best Saddle Maker–Modern

Circle Y of Yoakam

Yoakam, Texas

Circle Y produces one of the flashiest show saddles you'll ever lay your eyes on. If flash is not your game, the company makes a wide variety of roping and general-use saddles that are as bulletproof as they come, not that you'd ever shoot one. **Readers' Choice:** Billy Cook/Sulphur, OK

Best Safe Company

Sun Welding Safe Co.

Simi Valley, California

For over 20 years, Sun Welding has manufactured superior gun safes that are as functional as they are well-finished. They're made to protect whatever you put in them. We recommend guns and cash.

Best Silversmith

Clint Orms

Houston, Texas

Every piece of Clint Orms' work is forged, cut and finished by hand. Like nothing else you've ever seen, Clint's attention to detail is staggering. He produces the "best of the best" Western buckles and finishings, made with sterling silver, 14-karat tri-colored gold and precious gems. **Readers' Choice:** Montana Silversmiths/Columbus, MT

Best Stagecoach Builder

Hansen Wheel & Wagon Shop

Lecher, South Dakota

Once again we give the nod to Hansen. For over 20 years, the Hansen family has handcrafted the best coaches and carriages money can buy, whether they are 18-passenger Deadwood stagecoaches or authentic replica Concord stagecoaches built to be exact copies of the 1880 Abbot-Downing coach.

Best Tent Maker

David Ellis Canvas Products

Durango, Colorado

Dave Ellis is "a tent maker to the cowboy." Of course, you don't have to ride a horse in order to own one of his quality tents. But spending the night in his popular 10-foot Range Tent, nestled in an Ellis Cavalry Bedroll, is guaranteed to make you dream you're campaigning with George Custer. **Readers' Choice:** Art Davis/Denver, CO

Best Tipi Maker

Reese Tipis

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Okay, so Reese doesn't make its tipis from cured buffalo hides the way the Plains Indians did, but buffalo aren't as plentiful as they once were. Remember all of those buffalo hunters? Reese takes top honors because of the "13 points of excellence" that go into every tipi the company makes. Each tipi is made from water-repellent, pre-shrunk, mildew-resistant army duck. **Readers' Choice:** David Ellis Canvas Products/Durango, CO

Best Trophy Buckle Maker

Frontier Trophy Buckles

Aztec, New Mexico

Vicki and Eddie Felder custom-make each of Frontier's buckles by hand, whether for a national, high school or collegiate rodeo. Even a couple of us here at *True West* are proud to say we've won buckles by Frontier Trophy Buckles. And they weren't for mutton bustin'.

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WESTERN MOVIES

BEST WESTERN MOVIE

RIDE WITH THE DEVIL

And you thought we'd pick *Tombstone*. Set in the Western border state of Missouri, *Ride with the Devil* captures the bitterness that pitted neighbor against neighbor and the suffering that spared no one on the Confederate side of the Civil War. Director Ang Lee's use of period weapons, clothing and language adds a plus to this film's A rating. **Readers' Choice:** *Tombstone*

BEST CHARLES BRONSON WESTERN MOVIE

CHATO'S LAND

We'll concede that Bronson isn't an Apache (for those of you who haven't seen the movie, he plays the mixed-blood Apache, Chato), but for our money, he would've made a good one. Director Michael Winner moves the story at a nail-biting clip, unlike the pace set by Sergio Leone, director of *Once upon a Time in the West* (also starring Bronson), which was our second choice.

BEST MADE-FOR-TV WESTERN

MONTE WALSH

Finally we have a Western that realistically portrays the struggles of a cowboy trying to find his place in changing times. The movie is directed by Simon Wincer *(Lonesome Dove, Quigley Down Under)* and stars Tom Selleck as the lead. An ensemble cast delivers a Western we'll watch again and again.

BEST WESTERN TV SERIES EVER

BONANZA

Who can forget Adam, Hoss, Little Joe and their father Ben Cartwright riding across their Ponderosa Ranch to begin every episode? What did it matter if Papa Cartwright would've been a 10-year-old when he first married and started siring children in order to have such old sons? When the TV show aired on NBC in 1959, it brought us an hour of Western adventure—in color—every Saturday evening (moved to Sunday in its third season). **Readers' Choice:** *Gunsmoke*

BEST LIVING WESTERN ACTOR

TOM SELLECK

Tom Selleck so captures the image of the cowboy and the Old West, movie directors can put him in Australia and never miss a beat. Who can forget Selleck bouncing a wooden bucket as he showed off his rifle marksmanship in *Quigley Down Under?* Selleck has almost single-handedly kept the Western genre alive, and he's so believable in his roles, it's impossible not to get lost in the story.

BEST LIVING WESTERN ACTRESS

MAUREEN O'HARA

Perhaps it's her red hair, or maybe her Irish temperament, but on screen Maureen O'Hara exudes a confidence and determination that must have been displayed by many pioneer women. We can think of no other actress who could have so often held her ground while standing toe-to-toe with John Wayne. **Readers' Choice:** Maureen O'Hara

BEST B-WESTERN ACTOR

GENE AUTRY

For kids in the 1940s and early '50s, Gene Autry was the Old West. No matter that his movies and screen character bore little resemblance to the real Old West, the Saturday matinee escape that he offered America's youth was wholesome and fun. And if we had a category titled "Best Former Actor Businessman," Gene would win that, too. **Readers' Choice:** John Wayne

BEST WESTERN FILM VILLAIN

JACK ELAM

Jack Elam owns this category. For years, this former accountant menaced his way across big and small screens, playing Western villains who were not merely bad, but evil. Possessing a face not meant for kissing leading ladies, Elam—with his glass eye—became the bad guy we loved to hate. **Readers' Choice:** Jack Palance

BEST SOURCE FOR CLASSIC WESTERN MOVIES

BUCK CASSIDY VIDEO

HAZLET, NEW JERSEY

If you're looking for B-oaters, look no further than Buck Cassidy. He stocks some even our diehard Western film buffs haven't heard of. Besides, you've got to admire a guy who's still a proud member of the Buck Jones Rangers and Hopalong Cassidy fan clubs. **Readers' Choice:** Westerns Channel on Encore

BEST WESTERN FILM FESTIVAL

LITTLE HOLLYWOOD WESTERN FILM FESTIVAL

KANAB, UTAH

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, How the West was Won, Gunsmoke and *The Outlaw Josey Wales* are just a few of the many Westerns filmed in the Kanab area, which makes it the ideal spot for "reel" cowboys to enjoy their favorite films. This Western film festival airs every August during the Western Legends Round-up celebration. While you're here, you can even visit the set of *Gunsmoke* and walk into Miss Kitty's saloon.

BEST WESTERN MOVIE SET

MELODY RANCH

NEWHALL, CALIFORNIA

Built in the 1920s, bought by Gene Autry in the '40s and then purchased by the Veluzat family in the '90s, this place is full of movie history. The TV shows *Have Gun Will Travel* and *Hopalong Cassidy* were filmed there, as were more recent Westerns such as *Wild Bill* and *Deadwood* (to be released in 2004 by HBO). **Readers' Choice:** Old Tucson Studios/Tucson, AZ

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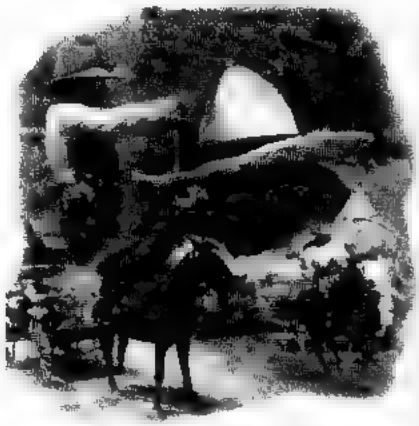

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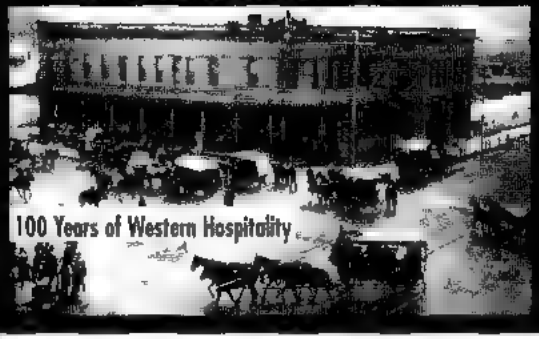

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Best Country Artist of All Time

Johnny Cash

Johnny Cash's career spans nearly five decades, and since 1955, he has made over 150 albums. Few other singers garner as much respect and admiration across generations and musical genres. In 1965, with inspiration from *True West* magazine and its founder Joe Austell Small, Cash produced *The Ballads of the True West*. Because of Cash and Small's close friendship, we are proud to count Johnny Cash as part of our *True West* family.

Best Current Country CD

The Man Comes Around

Johnny Cash

Johnny Cash has never fit snuggly into any particular musical genre. Out of convenience we call him country, but let's face it, Johnny Cash is, well, Johnny Cash! On his latest CD *The Man Comes Around*, Cash combines a wide diversity of music from Nine Inch Nails' "Hurt" and Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" to the Beatles' "A Day in the Life," and transforms them into his own songs. The CD is a testament to the depth and talent of the Man in Black.

Best Country Male Vocalist (Other than Johnny Cash)

Marty Robbins

Marty Robbins signed his first record contract with Columbia Records in 1951 and soon had many number one hits, including "Singing the Blues," "A White Sportcoat" and of course, "El Paso." In 1959, he released his legendary *Gunfighter Ballads and Trail Songs* (re-released on CD in 1999). Marty Robbins passed away in 1982, but he continues to be our country favorite.

Best Country Female Vocalist

Susanna Van Tassel

Honky-tonk angel Susanna Van Tassel is often compared to Patsy Cline and Tammy Wynette. Her expressive voice is full, clear and every bit as captivating as those she's compared to, especially on her latest CD, *My Little Star*.

Best Alt-Country/Americana CD

Just A Songwriter

Kenny Butterill

Just A Songwriter is a laid-back, bluesy collection of well-written songs and inviting melodies. Butterill's smooth smoky vocals and cool-handed slide guitar give the CD a sexy and seductive aura, just like the feeling you might have sitting in the mountains above Santa Cruz, California, on a warm summer evening, sipping red wine as you watch the sun melt away.

Best Alt-Country/Americana Male Artist

Steve Earle

Steve Earle isn't the kind of artist who compromises his beliefs and convictions to sell records. Despite the controversy he generated, Earle calls his latest CD *Jerusalem* "the most pro-American record I've made." Sometimes it takes uncommon courage and integrity to stand up for what you believe, but this is often what separates good artists from great ones.

Best Alt-Country/Americana Female Artist

Lucinda Williams

Lucinda Williams is finally receiving the recognition she so richly deserves. Who else can write and sing with such raw passion and feeling? Who else can bare her soul with so much honesty? Williams' songs of love, lust, pain, loss and loneliness are as real as it gets.

Best Folk CD

Modern Art

Tom Russell

Tom Russell combines his original material with some of his favorites from other artists in this exceptional work. The CD features three duets with his good friend Nanci Griffith, including "The Ballad of Sally Rose" and Griffith's own "Gulf Coast Highway." Russell uses first person narratives to bring his subjects to life. His modern artists and heroes speak to us directly, beautifully and powerfully.

Best Folk Male Artist

Slaid Cleaves

With his own combination of grace and grit, Slaid Cleaves stands tall among fellow Texas singer-songwriters, such as Ray Wylie Hubbard and Billy Joe Shaver. On his CD *Broke Down*, Cleaves paints vivid pictures of people down on their luck and of legends like Sandy Gray—a Canadian logger who loses his life untangling a logjam. Cleaves searches for grace where it is not easily found, and as with any great folk singer, it is the search that allows the music to come forth.

Best Folk Female Artist

Tish Hinojosa

Born to Mexican emigrants in 1955, and having grown up in San Antonio, Texas, Hinojosa understands the plight of hardworking people. With her rich soprano voice, she reflects her feelings and passions about life and death, struggle and sacrifice and love and truth. She sings with soulful honesty and intensity, and possesses a voice that will melt your heart.

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Best Cowboy CD

Montana Cowboy

Ken Overcast

Ken's style is simple. Tell a good story in song with traditional guitar. Every song on the CD reflects some aspect of a true cowboy's life and dreams. So sit back on a cool night by a crackling fire and listen to real music by a real cowboy.

Best Cowboy Balladeer

Don Edwards

Bob Weaver of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame put it best: Don Edwards is "the best purveyor of cowboy music in America today," which is why for the second year in a row, Edwards has won this category.

Best Alt-Country-Folk-Bluegrass-Punkrocker

Joe West

OK, so it may be a while before you see this category at the Grammys, but it's a little difficult to pin down Joe West. Equipped with his tales of desperation, lost love, chemical dependency and rehab survivors, West blazes musical paths from South Dakota trailer parks to UFO souvenir shops in Roswell, New Mexico

Best Honky-Tonk CD

Your Trailer or Mine?

Honky Tonk Confidential

Honky Tonk Confidential carries a torch for traditional Country and Western swing. The CD features "16 songs about loving, drinking, cheating, murdering and dying." They may not be playing this CD on any top 40 country stations, but *Your Trailer or Mine?* is a honky-tonk barroom jukebox full of should-be country classics. Not only is the CD fun to listen to, we also love the cover art. By the way, Diana and Mike, can we have some more refrigerator magnets?

Best Bluegrass CD

Blazing the West

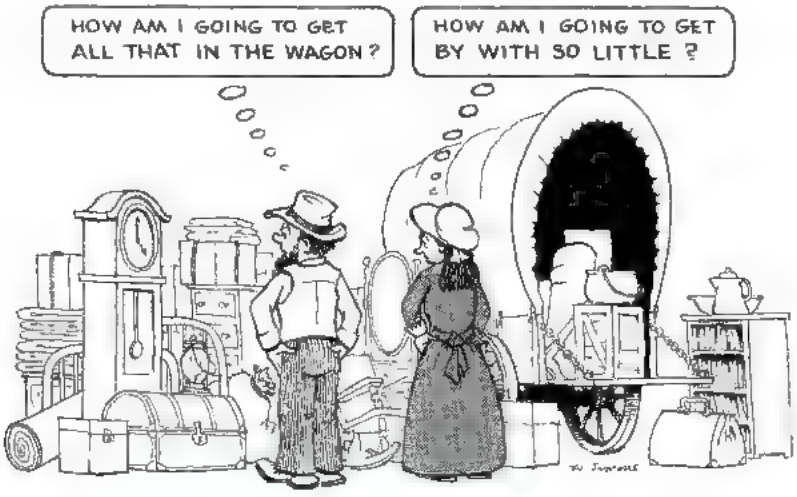
Ross Nickerson

Ross Nickerson's bluegrass banjo turned up the heat on Western Swing on his latest CD, *Blazing the West*—a bluegrassy nod to some Western classics. With a little help from award-winning artists Riders in the Sky, Mike Bub of the Del McCoury Band and Darol Anger of the original David Grisman Quintet, Nickerson puts his bluegrass brand on songs such as "San Antonio Rose" and "Streets of Laredo."

Best Country Western Saloon Vocalist

Pat James

It's no coincidence that our best Country & Western saloon vocalist performs in our "Best Western Saloon to get Smashed In," the Buffalo Chip in Cave Creek, Arizona. With a silky smooth voice that is hauntingly close to Marty Robbins, Pat keeps 'em dancin' close—or buckle polishing, as we like to say.



BY CYNTHIA A. WILLIAMS

From Sea to Shining Sea

Frontier army wives build the West with courage and elegance.

Martha Summerhayes lies in an army ambulance, one hand gently supporting her baby's head as they rattle over stones through Sanford's Pass in Arizona's White Mountains. In her right hand, she holds a derringer—cocked and wavering with the motion of the wagon—to her infant son's temple.

Her husband Jack has instructed her: "Don't let them get either of you alive."

It is April 1875, and Lt. Summerhayes, with wife and newborn son, are enroute from Camp Apache to Fort McDowell in the Arizona Territory. The Apache ambush they feared at Sanford's Pass does not occur, and now that they are safely through the pass, Jack hands his trembling wife a flask of whiskey. Mattie raises it to her lips, tilts her head back and swallows twice.

Like so many army brides, Martha Summerhayes is of a good Eastern family. Educated and accustomed to elegance, this tenderly-reared young lady now lies in a pitching army wagon, with a canteen of warm brown water swinging above her head. Mattie's chestnut hair is caked with dust, and freckles disfigure her once porcelain complexion.

The army wagon carrying her heirloom china slides over the edge of a narrow mountain trail and, dragging six army mules with it, crashes to the bottom of a ravine.

Mattie is thrown so hard from side to side of her wagon that she cannot even get to her knees. To save her baby, she hands him to a cavalryman riding alongside the wagon.

China and curtains

The memoirs of army wives on the Western frontier show us not battlefield slaughter, but women unpacking china and putting up curtains. They give us captivating glimpses of soldiers drying diapers before a fire and army officers dancing the quadrille with Apache warriors.

The everyday life in military forts was a portrait of communities where homes with vegetable gardens stared back at rows of barracks, where church bells tolled on Sundays, and where, to the dismay of their well-bred mothers, children ran wild with the "savages" and learned to swear from the enlisted men.

Following "bright buttons, blue uniforms and shining swords" into the wilderness, young women discovered filth, deprivation and terrors they had never imagined, including childbirth without medical care. But they stayed, and in the meanest hovels, they laid carpet and smoothed white linen on the tables.

In 1908, Martha Summerhayes wrote* Vanished Arizona, *an autobiography that recalls her life as an army wife.

– TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

The facts of military family life—gleaned from women's diaries and letters of the period—are not entirely dreary. The deaths of their children and sometimes cruel slaughter of their men were just as real as the formal balls and baseball games.

Mattie's baby son once played with the rattles of a snake, but within a decade of his birth, the children's parties included punch and ice cream. Where lonely men once had only liquor and card games for entertainment, they came to enjoy theatricals and to waltz with their ladies to the "dreamy strains" of the regimental orchestra.

Caught in the bloody clash of two cultures, these displaced Victorian women blithely played tennis and rode to the hounds. And in doing so, they helped push the boundaries of the United States from sea to shining sea.

In reality, the West may have been tamed less by the hand that held the gun, than by the hand that gently, but firmly, set the china cup on the dining table.

Cynthia A. Williams is a freelance writer and history lover, who believes Americans should honor their past.

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BY ROBERT DALTON

Custard's Last Stand

Before George A. Custer, there was Amos J. Custard.

Lt. Col. George A. Custer ignored warnings about overwhelming numbers of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors in 1876. Sgt. Amos J. Custard of the 11th Kansas Cavalry also cast caution to the wind.

But the inflexible Sgt. Custard made his fateful decision 11 years before the Battle of Little Bighorn. On July 26, 1865, Custard led his 24 men and their three-wagon supply train toward Platte Bridge Station (100 miles northwest of Fort Laramie) in the Dakota Territory.

As the troopers rode eastward from Sweetwater Station, they encountered a detachment of 30 men from the 11th Ohio Cavalry. The Ohioans had dug-in and were preparing their defense against an estimated 1,000 Sioux and Cheyenne warriors. The troops asked Custard to combine forces with them until the threat subsided, but Custard refused and continued forward.

Meanwhile, from Platte Bridge Station, Lt. Caspar Collins led another 30 men attempting to intercept Custard's supply train and provide escort. A mile from the station, they were ambushed by an overpowering force of Indians. Five soldiers were killed, including Collins, and six were wounded on their pell-mell dash back to the safety of the fort.

As the station's troops responded to the ambush of Collins' command and scrambled to man the ramparts of the fort, Custard's unit could be seen cresting a hill three miles to the west. The Sioux and Cheyennes quickly shifted their main force against these troops in the open, leaving behind enough warriors to isolate the fort.

A point element of five men from Custard's detachment, unable to affect the overwhelming attack swarming around them, made a run for the station. Only three of them made it back to safety

Corporal Amos J. Custard, c. 1863. Custard's .58 caliber musket shows he was likely serving in an infantry unit. After the Civil War, the 11th Kansas Cavalry was transferred west to protect the telegraph lines and emigrants. By then, Custard was a member of this unit and had been promoted to sergeant.

– Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society –

From the station roof, the battle was observed through a telescope. Custard stopped on a hillside, with his wagons forming three sides of a square, leaving the west side open.

The first warriors on the scene charged headlong against Custard's defenses and were repulsed. The Indians surged in numbers, reorganized and charged again, but this attack also failed. Then they dismounted and surrounded the train, using the folds of the land for cover. The observers at the station noticed that puffs of rifle smoke south of the wagons were gradually closing the distance to the defenders. Custard and his men fought gallantly but the outcome of the battle was inevitable. Four hours later, the puffs of gunfire ceased, and by evening, the Indians had retired to some northern bluffs.

By noon the next day, the Sioux and Cheyenne had departed the area. A detachment from the station went to the battle site. As one observer put it, "Twenty one of our dead soldiers were lying on the ground, stripped naked and mangled in every imaginable way." One soldier was unaccounted for and listed as missing.

All the bodies had been scalped, but the scalps were left on the ground, a sign that Indian losses had been so heavy, their victory was to be mourned, not celebrated.

The dead soldiers were wrapped in army blankets and buried where they lay. The U.S. Cavalry would have to wait until June 26, 1876, for another brash decision to attack an overwhelming force of Indian warriors.

Kansas history researcher **Robert "Bob" Dalton** is a Vietnam veteran, retired colonel and chief of staff of the Kansas National Guard.

BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

A Bull Market

North America's greatest rodeos

It started as a way for local cowboys to show off their skills (and wager a little money) and for bragging rights as to which ranch had the best cowboys. Instead of arguing about who put on the first real rodeo—we'll let Prescott and Pecos duke that out—we salute our favorite rodeos. Let 'er buck!

10. Grand National Rodeo, Horse & Stock Show, San Francisco, CA (Oct/Nov): A little wine and cheese with your roughstock? The Bay Area may seem an unlikely site for cowboys, clowns and barrel racers, but the Grand National, first held in 1941, is a premier rodeo. And Cow Palace is to rodeo what Willie Mays is to baseball.

9. Pendleton Round-Up, Pendleton, OR (Sept): Established in 1910, the four-day event attracts more than 50,000 spectators each year and salutes Oregon's Indian heritage as well with a tribal village, Indian beauty contests, the Westward Ho! Parade and the Round-Up Pow Wow dance competition.

8. Cowboy Downhill, Steamboat Springs, CO (Jan): Founded by Olympian skier Billy Kidd and rodeo legend Larry Mahan, this unique event, which coincides with the National Western Stock Show, Rodeo and Horse Show in Denver, puts cowboys in chaps and hats on skis for a downhill dash. Another timed event requires contestants to lasso a girl, saddle a horse and perform a double slalom jump. No bull.

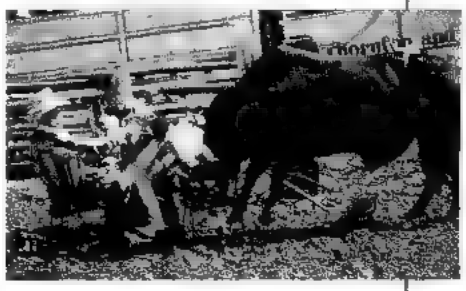
7. National High School Finals Rodeo, rotating site (July): See the stars of tomorrow today. The nonprofit National High School Rodeo Association put on its first finals in Hallettsville, Texas, in 1949. More than 1,500 contestants from 44 states, Canadian provinces and Australia compete in the annual finals.

6. West of the Pecos Rodeo, Pecos, TX (July): First held on Independence Day 1883, the Pecos rodeo lays claim as the first real rodeo. What once was a ropin' and ridin' deal for local waddies has grown into the Lone Star State's biggest outdoor rodeo.

5. Calgary Stampede, Calgary, Alberta (July): Wannabe cowboy Guy Weadick helped found this Canadian mainstay in 1912, when more than 80,000 spectators watched the parade alone. Chuck wagon races were added in 1923. Today, the rodeo attracts more than 500 contestants and needs 1,800 volunteers.

4. Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo, Prescott, AZ (July): This event also claims to be the world's first rodeo, and it's definitely a favorite of cowboys and fans. Besides, any rodeo that was the setting for the Sam Peckinpah-directed, Steve McQueen rodeo flick *Junior Bonner* is worthy of the top five.

3. Angola Prison Rodeo, Angola, LA (Oct): Lousiana State Penitentiary, the largest maximum-security pen in America, lets medium- and minimum-security inmates play cowboy in "The Wildest Show in the South." These folks have about as much business on bucking stock as a frog, and the rodeo lives up to its moniker.



Four inmates at the Angola Prison Rodeo play convict poker. The last player to remain seated wins.

– COURTESY JOHNNY D. BOGGS –

2. Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo, Cheyenne, WY (July): In 1897, a local newspaper called it "the greatest and most successful occasion ever celebrated in the West." Maybe that's why this classic is trademarked "The daddy of 'em all." A lot of rodeo is crammed into one session while parades, concerts and other festivities break out all over town.

1. National Finals Rodeo, Las Vegas, NV (Dec): Let none other than six-time all-around champ Larry Mahan say how big the NFR has become. "My biggest year winning-wise was actually my last year winning the all-around, and that was about $63,000. Guys win that if they win three go-rounds in the National Finals now." Rodeo's biggest event brings out the best cowboys, vendors and fans—and the sorriest blackjack players Vegas has ever seen.

Johnny D. Boggs has been bucked off horses before—but never in a rodeo.

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BY THE EDITORS

Is this a Real Execution?

And if so, how much are these photos worth?

Thousands of dollars can be at stake when you come across authentic Old West pictures. Maybe you find them in a trunk, or they fall out of a well-used book or maybe, as is the case here, the owner befriends your son and GIVES him the negatives.

David Dill of Valentine, Texas, wants to know if the three pictures his son, Mike, received really show Rangers executing a Mexican. We sent the photos to our experts—two men whose Old West photo collections are the envy of everyone.

WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY

Bob McCubbin: "My guess on these photos is that they were taken in Mexico at the time of the Mexican Revolution (the Pancho Villa thing) about 1915. The mountains look bigger than any I have seen in Texas. The hats and outfit of the cowboy looking guy would be about that time period. The other guys are not dressed like cowboys—more like military or revolutionary types. Killings like this were rampant during that period. And there were Americans who went down there and took part. I do not find it that spectacular. Maybe [the owners] were hoping it showed some Texas Rangers executing a Mexican rustler. But I don't think that is it."

Craig Fouts: "The photos are very interesting. It looks to me to be an execution by the military around the time of Pancho Villa. Yet there is a cowboy doing the executing! It would be interesting to know the story behind it. Execution photos around this time period are not uncommon and do not demand . . . high prices, but this is the first time I have seen a cowboy or ranger doing the executing! I would appraise the originals between $300 to $500. But then again, I'm not a qualified appraiser and am only going on what I might be willing to pay for them."

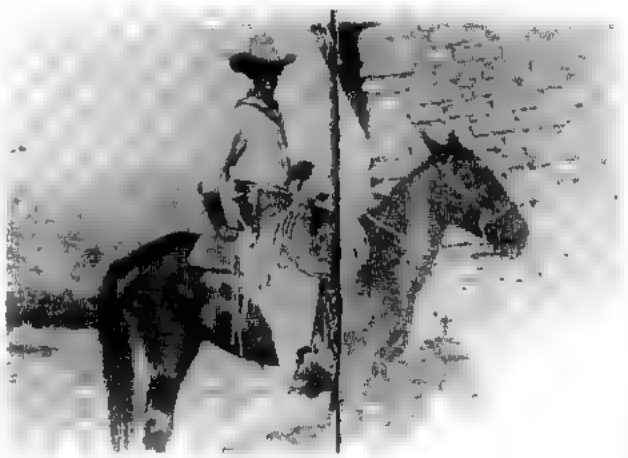
True West **Photo Sleuths' Bottom Line:**

- Mexican Revolution Period.
- Cowboy hat and batwing chaps date the photos after 1900.
- Value: $500.

A Mexican execution: real or fake?

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY MIKE DILL

Note the body lying against the wall. Dead or alive?



Is this man really an executioner?

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TRUE WEST EXCLUSIVE

CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

BILLY'S BACKYARD BALLET

BILLY THE KID ESCAPES

SIX KILLED IN BLOODFEST

REGULATORS ROUTED

The first man to reach the gate is shot dead.

– ALL PAINTINGS BY BOB BOZE BELL –

BY BOB BOZE BELL

Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker

JULY 19, 1878

Fire is licking at the last room —Susan McSween's kitchen. In this final refuge, Alex McSween sits with his head in his hands. His 12 defenders are crowded into this crumbling, tiny space, where the walls are too hot to touch and the air is heavy with smoke. The men are blackened, tired, thirsty and desperate, but they've decided to wait until dark before attempting to escape

Housebound for nearly five days, the 12 men in the McSween home were holding their own until around 2 p.m. today, when one member of Sheriff Peppin's posse, Andy Boyle, torched the northwest corner of the house.

At approximately 9 p.m. five defenders, including Billy Kid, jump into the backyard and run toward a gate in the side yard. (One report says they removed their boots and shoes.) Before they reach the gate, four Peppin men along the outside of the back wall spot them and open fire.

Law student Harvey Morris is shot dead at the gate. The remaining four, including Billy Kid, leap over his body and return fire as they race for the creek. Incredibly, they make it.

McSween and another group of his besieged men make their move. But as they approach the east gate, just outside the shadow of the flames, the guns at the back gate explode, driving McSween and his men back. They stay in the corner "about five minutes" before making yet another attempt, which also sends them scurrying back into the shadows.

Gunshots and yells are heard from across the creek, as the Kid and crew celebrate their hair-raising escape.

Ten grueling minutes pass. All the guns along the back wall are aimed at the darkness. Finally, McSween allegedly says, "I shall surrender."

Huddled along the back fence at the north gate are four Peppin men: Joseph Nash, Robert Beckwith, John Jones and Andrew Boyle.

> "John Jones and Dummy jumped behind the corner of the McSween building. I jumped back to the gate and we continued to fire at McSween and his party as long as there were any of them left, they doing the same to us."
>
> —*Joseph Nash*

"Then the man we called 'Dummy' came up," Nash later testified. Robert Beckwith yells, "I am a deputy sheriff and I have a warrant for your arrest," just before opening the gate and entering the backyard. Leading the quartet into the yard, Beckwith reaches the darkened corner, when someone shouts, "I shall never surrender!" and Beckwith is shot in the eye. The men behind Beckwith empty their guns into the darkness.

As fire consumes the last remaining wall in the house, six bodies lie crumpled in the backyard: Alexander McSween, Francisco Zamora, Vicente Romero, Harvey Morris, Yginio Salazar and Robert Beckwith.

The fight is over.

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

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Events Leading Up to the July 19, 1878 Fight

February 18

Alex McSween's partner, John Tunstall, is killed by renegade members of a sheriff's posse, touching off the Lincoln County War.

March 9

Tunstall's supporters, including Billy Kid, ride under the banner of the Regulators and kill several men believed to have been involved with murdering Tunstall.

April 4

Supported by McSween, the Regulators kill Buckshot Roberts at Blazer's Mill for his alleged role in Tunstall's murder.

April 30

In Lincoln, the McSween faction fights a Murphy-Dolan brigade, which calls itself the Seven Rivers Warriors.

May 28

The governor of New Mexico urges all "bodies of men" in Lincoln County to "disarm and return to their homes and their usual pursuits." The plea falls on deaf ears.

July 14

Tired of running, Alex McSween returns to his home in Lincoln, where he and his men prepare for a siege.

July 15

Around dusk, a Murphy-Dolan posse arrives in Lincoln and the sniping begins.

July 17

Gen. Dudley, the commander of nearby Fort Stanton, sends several officers to Lincoln to investigate a report that one of his soldiers has been fired upon. Of the 50 families living in Lincoln, only 12 remain.

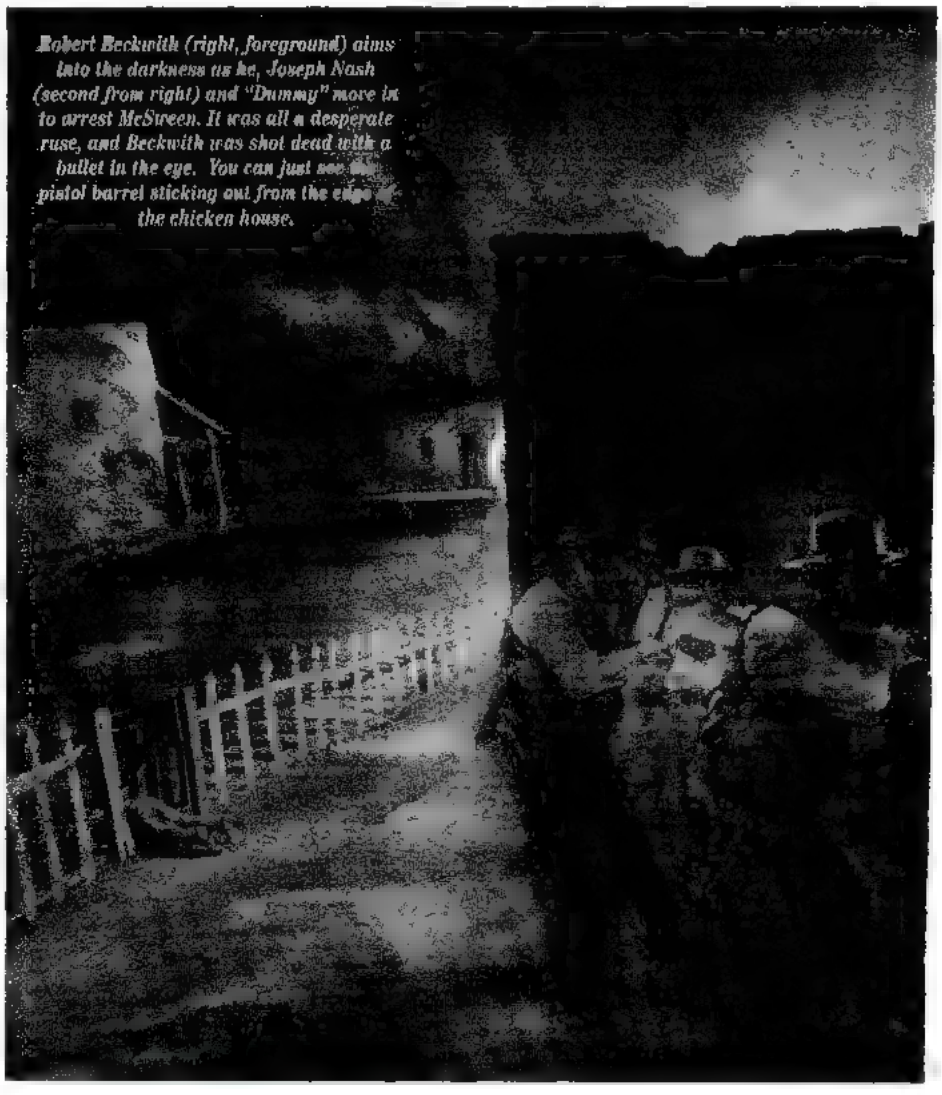
July 19

Gen. Dudley arrives in Lincoln around noon. Although he preaches impartiality to both sides, he allows Sheriff Peppin's men to join the army troops as they march through town. Peppin's men drop off at strategic points, taking control of key spots around McSween's home.

The Kid peeks out from the smoke-filled kitchen as he and the McSween men get ready to make a break. The heat must have made it almost unbearable.

"I came very nearly being hit in the neck by someone shooting from the chicken house. Then myself and Andrew Boyle went round to the back of the chicken house, punched a hole through . . . the adobe wall with a log and called out to parties in the house to surrender; they said they would not and never had intended to. Then Andy fired two or 3 shots into the chicken house through the hole that Andy and myself had made."

—Joseph Nash



Robert Beckwith (right, foreground) aims into the darkness as he, Joseph Nash (second from right) and "Dummy" move in to arrest McSween. It was all a desperate ruse, and Beckwith was shot dead with a bullet in the eye. You can just see the pistol barrel sticking out from the edge of the chicken house.

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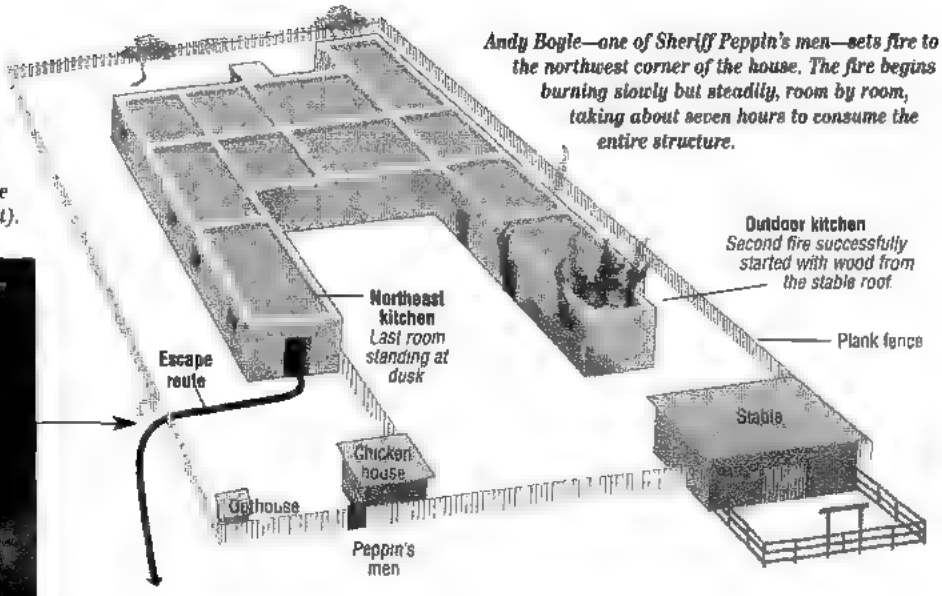
Billy makes a miraculous escape, (below) surviving a hail of gunfire from Peppin's men shooting from behind the back wall (at right).


Andy Boyle—one of Sheriff Peppin's men—sets fire to the northwest corner of the house. The fire begins burning slowly but steadily, room by room, taking about seven hours to consume the entire structure.
Outdoor kitchen
Second fire successfully started with wood from the stable roof
Northeast kitchen
Last room standing at dusk
Plank fence
Escape route
Stable
Chicken house
Outhouse
Peppin's men

AFTERMATH: ODDS & ENDS

McSween's servants, Sebrian Bates and George Washington, their eyes overflowing with tears, were forced to play their fiddles as the posse celebrated with whiskey. Andy Boyle checked the lifeless bodies, kicking Yginio Salazar. As Boyle took aim to shoot him, Milo Pierce said, "Don't waste your shot on that greaser, he's long gone and dead as a herring."

McSween's body had five bullets in it; Morris was hit once; Romero had three wounds, in his torso and legs; Zamora took eight shots in the torso; and Robert Beckwith was felled with a shot in the head and one in the wrist.

Beckwith's body was taken to the Murphy-Dolan store. Around midnight, the music and laughing faded as the victors went to bed. As the burning embers of McSween's former home crackled and popped, one of the bodies began to stir—and then crawl. Suffering from two bullet wounds (one in the back and the other in the shoulder), Salazar inched himself, painfully and slowly, a half mile to the Otero home, where he was taken in. Miraculously, he lived.

After escaping McSween's burning house with his backyard ballet, Billy Kid became one of the most famous men in New Mexico. Another shooting scrape three years later would be the icing on the cake, but that's another *Classic Gunfight.*

We recommend: *The Illustrated Life & Times of Billy the Kid,* by Bob Boze Bell. Order the book at 888-687-1881.

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— Model 1874 Cartridge Availability Table —

1874 The Boss Gun	CALIBER												
1874 Hartford Model	40-50 ST or BN	40-70 ST or BN	40-90 ST or BN	45-70 2⅛" ST	45-90 2⅝" ST	45-100 2⅝" ST	45-110 2 ⅞" ST	45-120 3 ¼ ST	50-70 1⅞" ST	50-100 2" ST	50-140 3¼ ST	38-55 ST	40-65 Target

BN = Bottleneck, ST = Straight. (44-Cal. Sharps & Remington available on Special Order)

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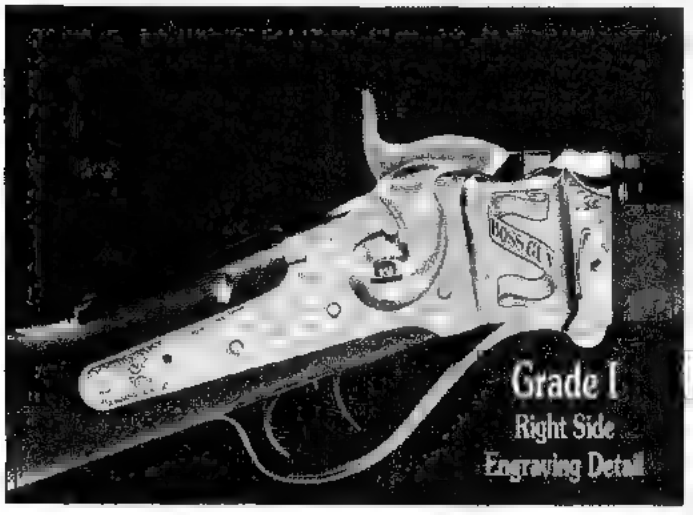
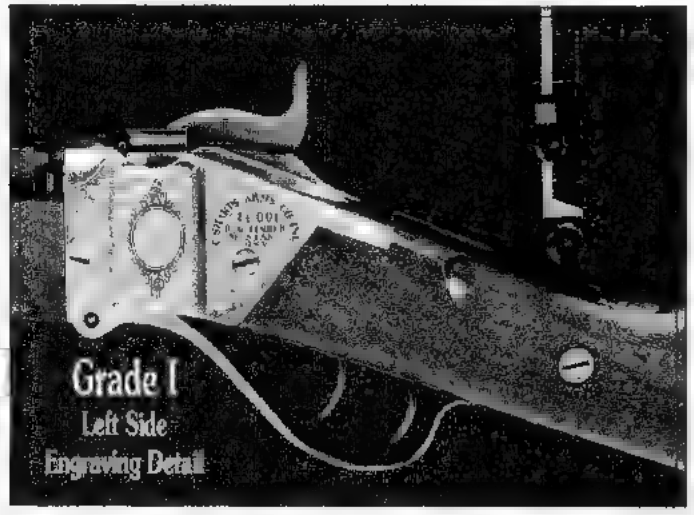
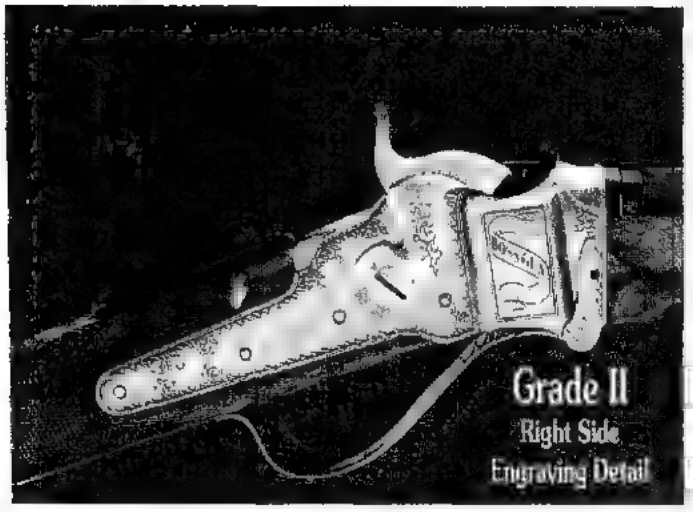
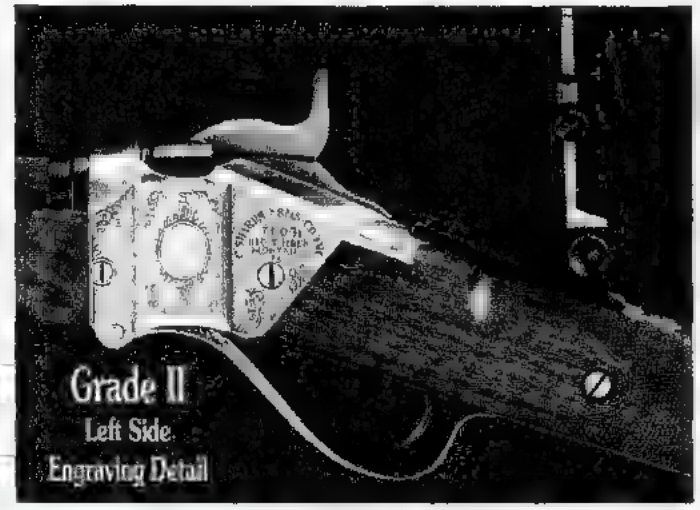
Base Price as described: $3,395.00. For XXX Fancy Walnut, add $175.00. (All Custom Rifles require a 50% deposit and balance upon "NOTICE OF RIFLE COMPLETION."









BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

Return of *The Hired Hand*

An interview with Peter Fonda.

Many film historians argue that the Western died with 1969's *The Wild Bunch.*

After all, what else could the genre say after Sam Peckinpah's lyrical bloodbath? But they're mistaken, because a handful of realistic, poignant and brilliantly executed Westerns hit theaters in the early 1970s: Robert Altman's *McCabe & Mrs. Miller* (1971), Robert Aldrich's *Ulzana's Raid* (1972), Mark Rydell's *The Cowboys* (1972) and Richard Brooks' *Bite the Bullet* (1975).

Add to that list Peter Fonda's little sleeper, *The Hired Hand* (1971).

Although Fonda's directing debut received mostly good reviews when the film opened, it died a quicker death than several characters in the film's nail-biting, shockingly savage final shoot-out.

"Universal had 52 screens available and nothing to put in them except *The Hired Hand*," recalls Fonda, who was 31 when he began shooting the movie in the fall of 1970. "We were in 52 theaters for two weeks. At the end of two weeks, someone brought me *Weekly Variety*, which shows the top 50 grossing films, and we came in at No. 5. The next week we went off the list. I said, 'How can you go from No. 5 to not being on the list?' That's when I found out we were only out in 52 screens, and then we were yanked."

Surprising? After all, Fonda was a hot Hollywood property, coming off the success of 1969's *Easy Rider*, and no longer regarded as just Henry's son and Jane's brother. What may have hurt *The Hired Hand* was its topic: Weary cowboy Harry Collins (Fonda) returns home to his wife Hannah (Verna Bloom) and daughter, whom he abandoned seven years earlier. Working there with his saddle pard (Warren Oates, in an atypical romantic, intelligent role), Collins learns that during his absence, his wife obtained a reputation as a woman who offered her hired hands more than biscuits and gravy.

"This was an extraordinary role for a woman," Bloom says, "and it dealt with issues that women now are doing all the time but back then it wasn't like that, and I remember that when the film showed up on television, they had cut out one of the best scenes that Alan Sharp had written, Peter had directed or I had had to play."

Adds Fonda: "It was called the first feminist Western . . . and the last."

For more than 30 years, Fonda has fought to get his movie recognition, and it's finally happening. The Sundance Channel's limited theatrical rerelease of *The Hired Hand* will occur this fall and the DVD release is scheduled for October 2003. Film festival audiences have been enthusiastic, although you better face this: If you're looking for Randolph Scott, look elsewhere. *The Hired Hand* is slow-paced and talk heavy, but that's the way Fonda wanted it.

"I knew I wanted to shoot this film in New Mexico," he says, "and when you see the film you'll understand a great deal about it because for me, background is as much a character as the people who are walking or talking."

He also wanted his characters to look authentic, so makeup wasn't allowed. "What would you find in 1881?" he asks, laughing before making this true confession:

"I have very fair eyebrows and eyelashes. I put dark dye on my eyelashes. But I got outfoxed by Rita Rogers (who plays bad guy Severn Darden's "wife"). She had those glue-in eyelashes, and we could see it on the camera, but it was too late to rip them out."

The movie, shot on a budget of just over $1 million, became a jumping-off point for many. Lawrence Paul's first set construction was Hannah Collins' log cabin. Paul is best known as production director for 1982's *Blade Runner*. Richard Bruno, who had previously designed costumes for 1968's *Wild in the Streets*, made sure the men and women in *The Hired Hand* were properly dressed. Most Westerns of that period had a Western Warehouse appearance, but *The Hired Hand* looked

***Saddle partners Warren Oates (left) and Peter Fonda ride into theatres again this fall in the limited rerelease of* The Hired Hand.**

– Courtesy Sundance Channel –

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more like the Drovers Mercantile Bruno later worked as costume designer on 1978's *Heaven Can Wait*, 1980's *Raging Bull* and 1990's *Goodfellas*.

And don't forget Sharp, one of the most underrated screenwriters. His Westerns include *Ulzana's Raid*, perhaps the best chronicle of the Apache Wars, and the inferior *Billy Two Hats* (1973) with Gregory Peck. Sharp's other credits include the 1975 crime drama *Night Moves* with Gene Hackman and the 1995 historical Scottish adventure *Rob Roy*.

The Hired Hand also marked cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond's first outdoor movie, although Fonda didn't know that when he hired him.

Imitating Ziggy's Hungarian accent, Fonda recalls the director of photography telling him: "'Jesus Christ, Peter, just tell me where you want the camera, don't tell me what the scene means. I don't need to know what the scene means' . . . So I ask, 'What did you do with the other directors you've worked with?' He says, 'What other directors? I shoot Coca-Cola bottles.'"

Zsigmond went on to film *McCabe & Mrs. Miller*, *Deliverance* (1972), *The Sugarland Express* (1974), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) and *The Ghost and the Darkness* (1996).

"I was very fortunate in my first movie as a director to have an actress so accomplished as Ms. Bloom," Fonda says, "and an actor so accomplished and so misused as Mr. Oates. Everyone took their roles very seriously for very little money but with a lot of energy and heart. I'm thrilled to be back with it now in a restored version. It's made me very proud, even though a lot of people have not been able to see our movie. Now they will be."

Johnny D. Boggs' latest book is *Great Murder Trials of the Old West*.

"Offhand, I'd say someone's tampered with the Kid's gun."

WESTERNS IN THE WORKS

Disney's horse-epic* Hidalgo *is now slated for a March 2004 release.

– By Richard Cartwright/Disney –

Despite theatrical trailers heralding an October 2003 release, Disney's *Hidalgo* will not be released until March 2004. Screenwriter **John Fusco** says even though he stands by the validity of Frank T. Hopkins' story, Disney's final promotional pitch will state that *Hidalgo* is based on a legend, not a true story (as stated in earlier pitches). Was Hopkins a fraud or a true desert cowboy? Find out in March 2004, when *True West* reports on *Hidalgo* and the controversy over Frank T. Hopkins' legendary claims.

Whatever happened to the Warner Brothers' remake of the 1973 sci-fi movie *Westworld*? According to Producer **Jerry Weintraub's** office, the movie doesn't even have a script yet, but **Arnold Schwarzenegger** is still with the project even though he has not yet decided if he will play the robotic gunfighter or one of the virtual resort's guests. Writers **Michael Ferris** and **John Brancato** *(Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines)* have been assigned to write the script. *Westworld* is about gunslinger tourists whose fantasy vacation is to hunt a robotic Old West gunman. But, the tourists end up as the prey when the robot's circuits go cockeyed and he turns into a killing machine.

Attention Lewis and Clark experts and historians: A Lewis and Clark documentary called *Rediscover the Corps* will be shown on the Montana Television Network, which has signed a three-year deal with 40 Below Productions. Each week, the network's six stations will feature a 90-second vignette from various locations along the Lewis and Clark Trail. A full-length documentary will be available in 2006. The project is the baby of three North Dakotans: Producer/Director **Kirk Roos,** Producer/Editor **Chad Spokely** and **Clay Jenkinson,** who will narrate the vignettes. Contact the Communication Corps at rediscoverthecorps.com for more information.

Westerns channel on Encore: In November, African Americans and women of the West will be highlighted in a month-long series of films, including *Montana Belle*, *The Ballad of Little Jo* and an original documentary, *That's Black Entertainment: Westerns*.

A Buffalo Meal

Domestic cattle gave milk, but buffalo meat was a favorite meal in the 1800s as it was more palatable and less inclined to cause indigestion.

Buffalo "bread" was found under the hide, along the backbone, and ran from the shoulder to the last rib. It was dry fat, and after being seasoned with salt, tasted like new baked bread.

Buffalo liver, sprinkled with gunpowder to give it a zesty flavor, was eaten raw.

Buffalo tongue was often cooked over an open fire of green sticks to add flavor.

Buffalo marrow was served as dessert. The bones were put on a dying fire and seasoned with salt and pepper. When ready, they were split open and the marrow was seasoned more and eaten.

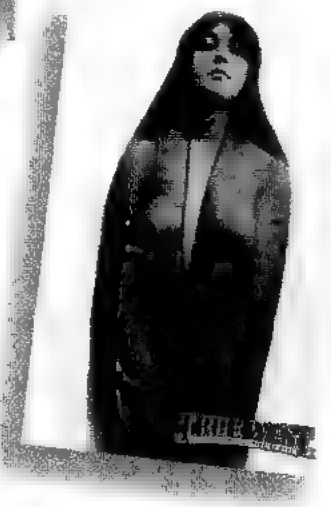
A hunter pulling out a buffalo's tongue, a former delicacy of the Great Plains, in this circa 1885 photo.

BY L.A. HUFFMAN –

Buffalo pudding was prepared by turning the large gut inside out and washing it. The lower end was tied shut with gut thong and the tube was stuffed with finely chopped kidney, kidney suet and choice fillet that had been seasoned with flour, salt and pepper. Then the open end was tied shut, and the intestine was rinsed, boiled and allowed to "rest" overnight. The next morning, it was fried in buffalo fat to a nice golden brown.

Last but not least were "prairie oysters"—calves' testicles that were skinned and soaked in salt water for an hour, rinsed, breaded in seasoned flour and then fried. Done right, they were finger-licking good.

—Howard Peterson



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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH • CURRENT PHOTOS BY JOHN BECKETT

TRUE COWGIRL

Stacy Halford is the genuine article.

Her love of horses must be part of her DNA, because it certainly didn't come from her environment: Stacy Halford grew up in Alaska where horses aren't plentiful and, even in a lucky year, there's only a three-month riding season.

"I think I was obsessed with horses from birth, and by the time I was 10, I'd worn my folks down," she remembers.

She will never forget the "really cool" horse camp run by the 4-H program each year, where she learned to ride both Western and English. At 17, she started roping in Alaska rodeos.

"Unlike a lot of events, this is 50-50: half the person, half the horse. And this was one rodeo event that wasn't segregated, it was completely coed," she says.

By 1991 she was competing both in and out of the ring, winning roping contests and the title of Miss Rodeo Alaska.

In 1994 she moved to Arizona, which she saw as "horse central—I was told there was a roping horse and arena on every corner and that was just about true." (Gives you an idea how sparse things really are up in our 49th state.)

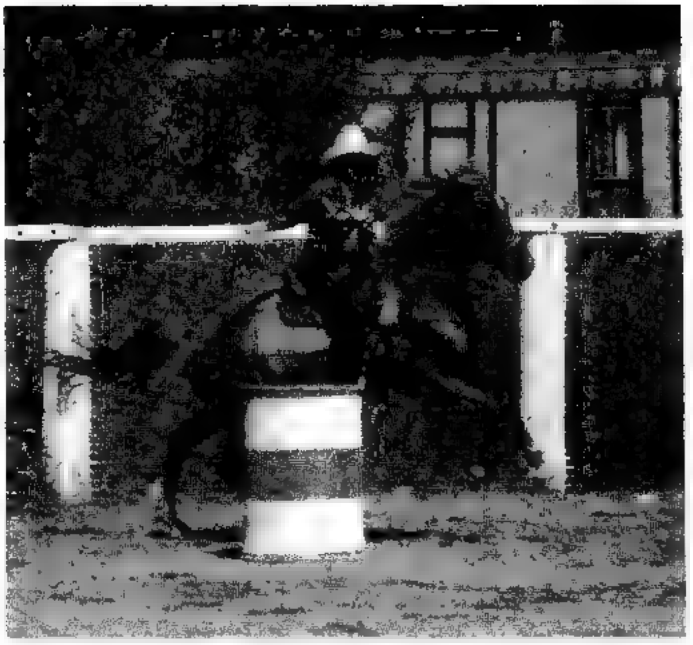
She waitressed to support herself and her son Trever, but her "girl next door looks" got her a better deal with the Ford modeling agency when she signed a contract in 1995. She's advertised everything from food to horse products. The Ford gig helped her save the money to buy her first roping horse in 1996. Each year she upgraded until in 2000, she bought Black Eddie. It didn't take long for them to start winning: saddles (four to date); buckles (six so far) and trucks—yes, she's won not one, but two trucks, which is remarkable all by itself.

She started team roping in Women's Professional Rodeo in 2000 and within a year, made it to the Women's National Finals. She also broke her left wrist—needed 45 minutes of surgery and two pins to put it back together—when her colt tripped, taking her down with him as he fell. But three weeks after the injury, she was in the 2001 team roping finals. The next year she made it to the finals in the tie-down calf roping and team roping events. This year, she's out there again, working toward her goal of a world championship.

"UNLIKE A LOT OF EVENTS, this is 50-50: half the person, half the horse. And this was one rodeo event that wasn't segregated, it was completely coed."
—Stacy Halford

EXHIBITED

WHO COULD RESIST the "girl next door" look? The Ford modeling agency certainly couldn't and gave Stacy Halford a contract in the mid-1990s. But Stacy is more than just a pretty face. She's a true Western cowgirl.



STACY WAS 11 YEARS OLD when she first tried barrel racing on her horse Shasta.

– PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE COURTESY STACY HALFORD –

STACY'S DAD TOOK HER MOOSE hunting in the Alaska Range when she was 12.

A BEAUTIFUL RODEO QUEEN in a beautiful Alaskan setting in 1991.

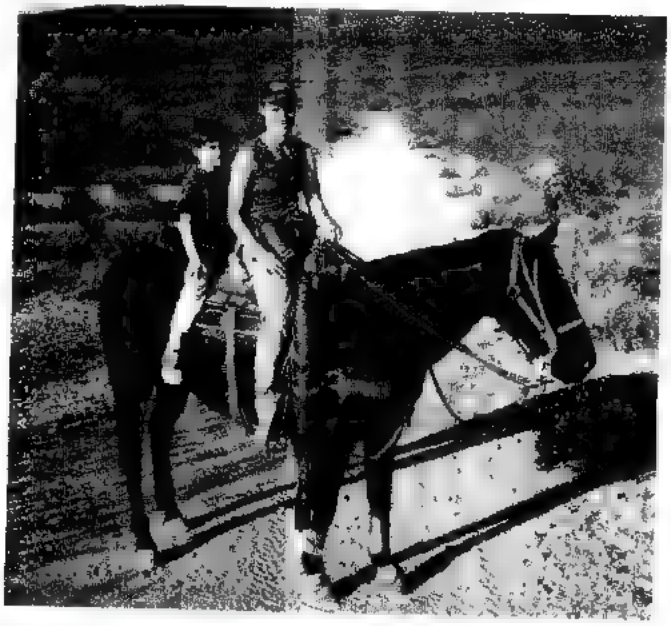
FOUR-YEAR-OLD Stacy catches her first fish.

SHE'S STILL FISHING, shown here with a prized Alaskan salmon in 1998.

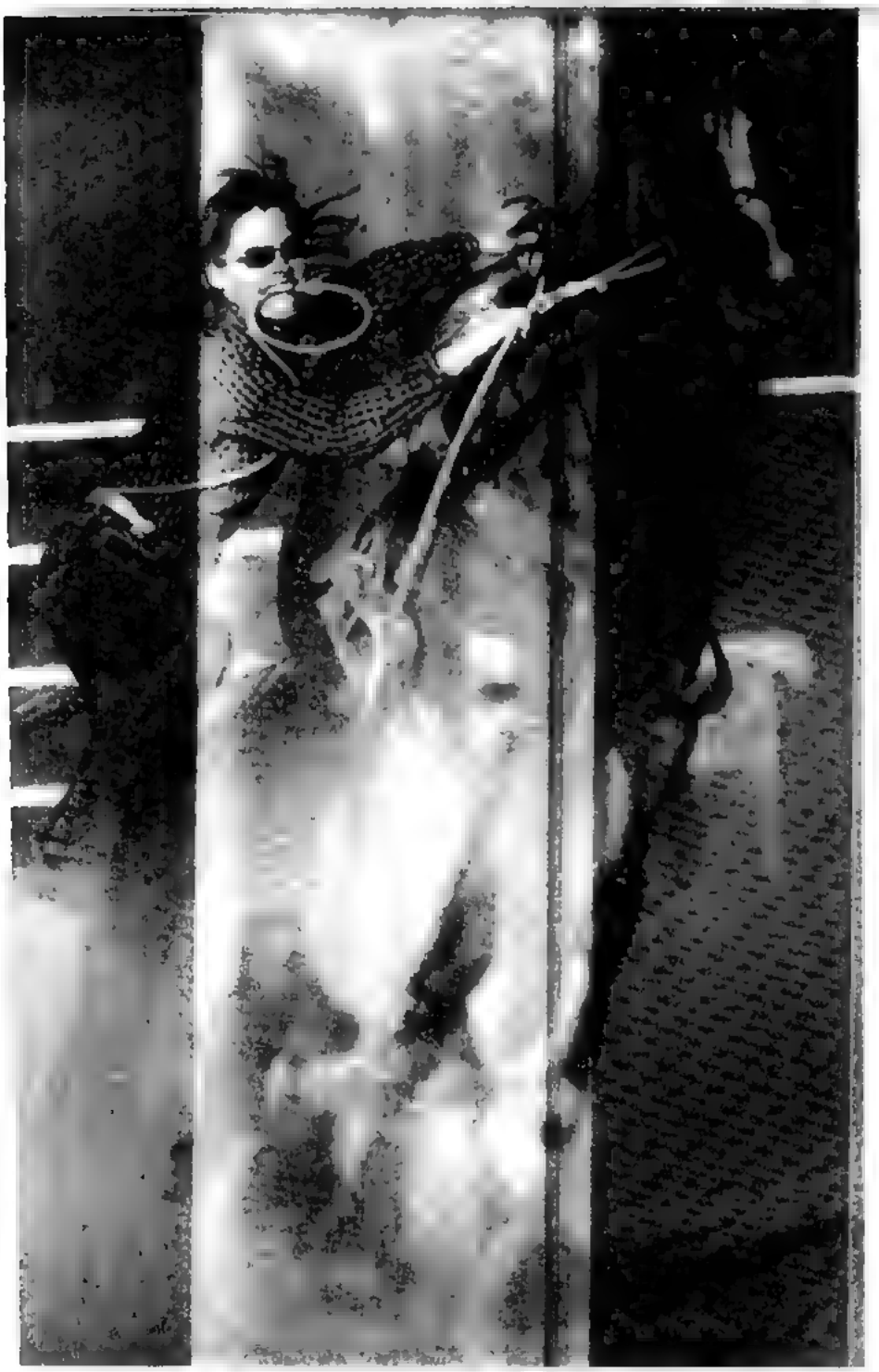
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THERE ARE HORSES TO FEED and stables to clean and water to refresh and it isn't even breakfast time, yet.

LUCKY SASSY: That's the pooch that has captured Stacy's heart and who can kiss the cowgirl anytime she wants—even as they begin a "day in the life of a cowgirl."



STACY HAS PASSED ON HER LOVE of fishing and hunting to her son Trever. Here they are riding Black Eddie to go deer hunting on Arizona's Table Mesa.



TRADING IN BLACK EDDIE FOR ROCKY

Black Eddie is now retired, but Stacy says she'll never forget how amazing he was: "He knew when something wasn't right—he knew what to do. He was worth his weight in gold. I paid $6,500 for him and won, like $80,000 on him in two and a half years."

Eddie now belongs to 10-year-old Trever.

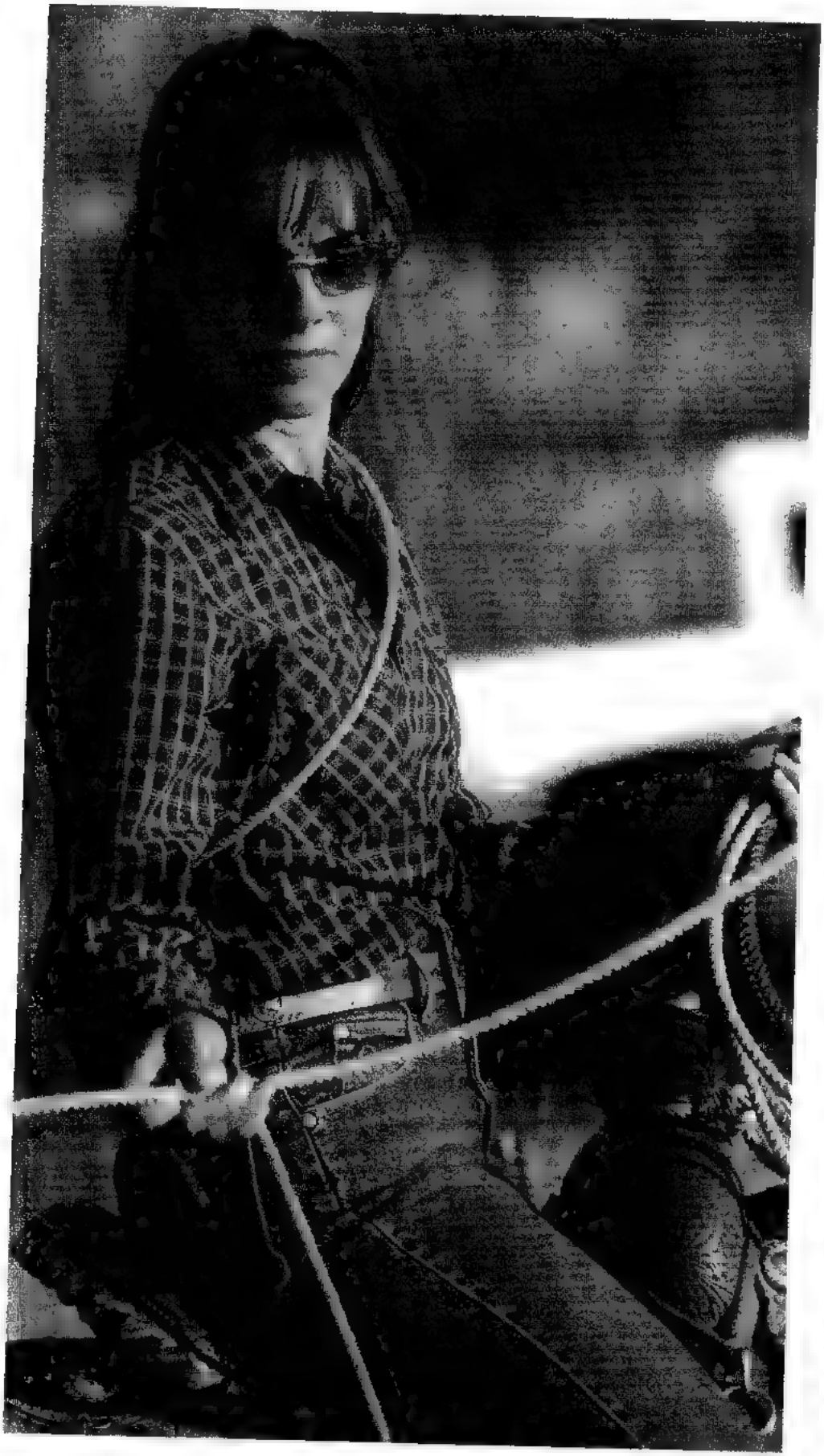
It took Stacy a year to find her new mount Rocky, who's still being trained, and so far, has proven "he's not like Eddie."

Her advice to potential cowgirls is this: "Take riding lessons. A lot of people try to rope, but they don't know how to ride."

She also says cowgirls should know the "dress code" of the rodeo: boots, a long-sleeved shirt to protect you from rope burns, a cowboy hat and Western jeans.

"Being a real cowgirl is about being able to ride and rope," she says. "It's not what you wear, it's not where you live. You can dress like a cowgirl or live in the country and not be a cowgirl. A lot of people can sit on a horse and hang on, but it's working on a horse that counts; your tool is your horse."

YOU DON'T GET TO BE a champion cowgirl without practice, and here she breaks out aboard Dottie (above), named after country singer Dottie West. Stacy continually turns 12-second runs. The fastest she's ever done is 10 seconds.



STACY IS A BORN COMPETITOR and when she hits, it's great; when she misses, it's agony. Some days she comes home with money in her jeans or a new truck, like the one that carried her home to Sassy this day. Sometimes she just comes home.

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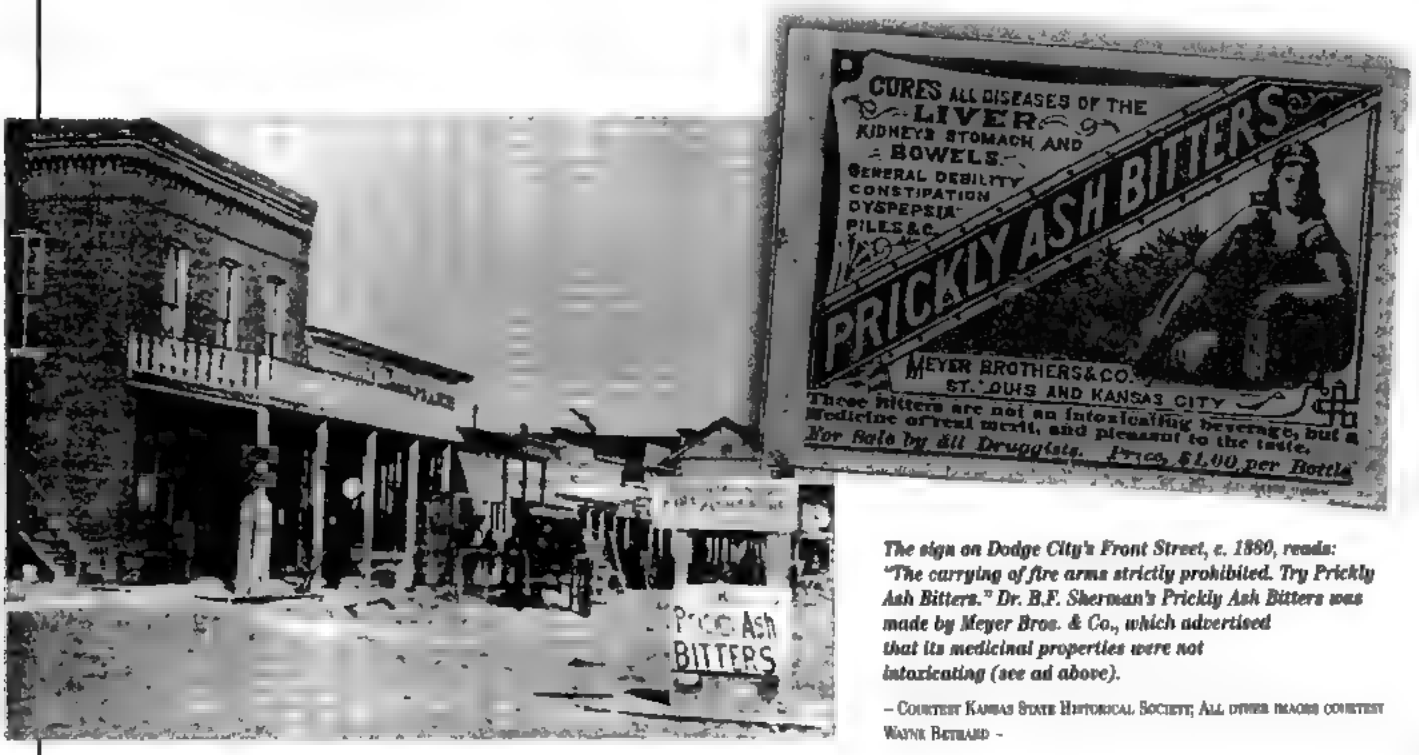
BY WAYNE BETHARD

A Cowboy's Bitter Dose of the West

Some frontier snake oil was good for what ails you.



The sign on Dodge City's Front Street, c. 1880, reads: "The carrying of fire arms strictly prohibited. Try Prickly Ash Bitters." Dr. B.F. Sherman's Prickly Ash Bitters was made by Meyer Bros. & Co., which advertised that its medicinal properties were not intoxicating (see ad above).

– Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society; All other images courtesy Wayne Bethard –

Doctors Bill Crawford and Jim Ferdon as Quaker medicine men in California, 1898.

Western settlers were plagued with the same problems of modern man: colds, flu, croup, crotch rot and gut aches. Many old remedies were effective, even if they often contained dangerous ingredients, such as kerosene, turpentine, arsenic, mercury or even strychnine.

Cowboys used what they had available. A creosote salve prepared on the Chisholm Trail was a mixture of burnt axle grease and sulfur, which was used for topical infections and abrasions.

Medicinal iron was made from the purest forms of iron available at the time—horseshoe nails and barbed wire. The nails and wire were cut into small segments, placed in water to dissolve, dried into a fine red powder and made into tonics and pills. Most tonics of the day contained iron, quinine and strychnine. In tiny amounts, strychnine acted as a stimulant.

Then there was petrified bat scat, which was a natural source of potassium nitrate. Centuries-old bat dung heaps, found in caves, solidified into a valuable frontier medical and military resource. Nitre—also known as potassium nitrate or American saltpeter—was mixed into a paste with alum and applied to the hollow of decaying teeth to relieve pain. Nitre also acted as a diuretic and diaphoretic to help cleanse the body, but it had other uses too. Soldiers and young men in other institutional situations had nitre slipped into their food to soften their sexual

An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure.

(Above) The sign held by the girl at the far left reads: "Brown's Iron Bitters has cured the whole family of Malaria and as a general tonic we believe it has no equal." Brown Chemist Co. was based in Baltimore, Maryland, and its trademark (right) shows that the tonic was registered May 21, 1878.

A risque 1901 ad for Carmeliter Bitters, which claimed to cure kidney and liver complaints. This ad may have created a few other complaints during Victorian times.

Medicine Shows, such as the one put on by Ferdon's Quaker Medicine Company (above), offered full evenings of drama, musical comedy, magic, Punch and Judy shows, bands and pie-eating contests.

(Above left) Brown's advertisement touts actress Lillian Langtry, the Jersey Lily, as its spokesperson for the medicine, which was said to cure everything from dyspepsia to depression. Brown's stressed iron as the cure-all, but the high alcohol content may have helped.
(Above right) A German advertisement for Brown's Iron Bitters.

urges. Extreme physical exhaustion, a probable reduction in bodily fluid volume and night sweats lessened the men's desire to do anything but sleep. (Mixed with sulfur and charcoal, nitre was also made into gunpowder.)

Of all the old time frontier remedies, the most notorious were bitters. Bitters were prepared by steeping roots, herbs, barks, berries, gums and seeds in spirituous liquors. The name

This Tippecanoe trade card (left) features the Battle of Tippecanoe, copyright 1883, from H.H. Warner & Co. of Rochester, NY. This Wabash Valley village in the Indiana Territory was once known as Tippecanoe (near Lafayette, Indiana). In 1808, two Shawnee brothers, Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa, known as the Prophet, settled here and named it Prophet's Town. While Tecumseh was away, Gen. William Henry Harrison set off to attack the Prophet's followers on November 6, 1811. Even though his brother had told him not to fight until the Confederacy was ready, Tenskwatawa ordered an attack on Gen. Harrison's army on November 7. The Indians were crushed and Tecumseh returned three months later to a deserted, burned-out town.

(Near right) The maker of Dr. J. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters made millions of dollars. During the Civil War, the cure-all was shipped to Union troops in boxcar loads. With 44.3% alcohol (compared to whiskey's 50%), you can see why. (Far right) In 1824, Dr. Johann Siegert, surgeon general to Simon Bolivar in South America, blended natural herbs to treat his troops. The bitters he developed are still used today to give food and beverages a great Caribbean kick.

derived from the sour taste imparted by the plants' active ingredients. Bitters became synonymous with any liquid tonic or elixir that was used to treat stomach ailments, and bitters with anodynes were a cure for pain.

Another class of bitters was known as simple bitters. Barberry, boneset and dogwood are vegetable bitters, which were used to improve appetite and expand digestive powers. Chamomile, Virginia snakeroot and cinnamon were classified as aromatic bitters, which stimulated the digestive system and had fragrant, near-breathtaking odors.

Old West pioneers purchased these medicines from traveling salesmen. These entrepreneurs traveled the West in circus-like wagons, selling their cures at medicine shows, which reached their zenith between 1880-95. In California in 1898, two of the most famous—or infamous—therapeutic thespians of the period were Doctors Bill Crawford and Jim Ferdon, Quaker medicine men who sold their bitters during full evenings of entertainment.

Wayne Bethard is a historical pharmacist who lives in Longview, Texas. His book, *Frontier Medicines—Potions, Lotions, and Deadly Elixirs*, will be released in April 2004.

In 1876, Henry S. Flint of Providence, Rhode Island, became proprietor of Old Dr. Warren's Quaker Bitters, changing the name to Dr. H.S. Flint & Co. Quaker Bitters. In Victorian times, children were a prime advertising tool in attracting customers. See also the Burdock Blood Bitters trade cards below.

INVALID LADIES!

THIS IS FOR YOU.

THERE are thousands of females in America who suffer untold miseries from chronic diseases common to their sex. This is due largely to the peculiar habits of life and fashion and the improper training of girlhood. Then, too, the physical changes that mark the three eras of womanhood (the maiden, the wife, and the mother), have much to do with their sufferings, most of which is endured in silence, unknown by even the family physician and most intimate friends. To all such whose hollow cheeks, pale faces, sunken eyes and feeble footsteps indicate nervous and general debility bordering on consumption, we would earnestly recommend that grand system-renovating tonic,

BURDOCK BLOOD BITTERS.

It makes pure, healthy blood, and regulates all the organs to a proper action, cures constipation, liver and kidney complaint female weakness, nervous and general debility, and all the distressing miseries from which two-thirds of the women of America are suffering. **All Invalid Ladies** should send for our **Special Circular** addressed to **Ladies Only**, which treats on a subject of vital importance

Address FOSTER, MILBURN & CO., Buffalo, N. Y.

Burdock Blood Bitters.

Mrs. J. G. ROBERTSON, Pittsburg, Pa., says she was suffering from general debility and want of appetite. Burdock Blood Bitters cured her. She has not felt better for years.

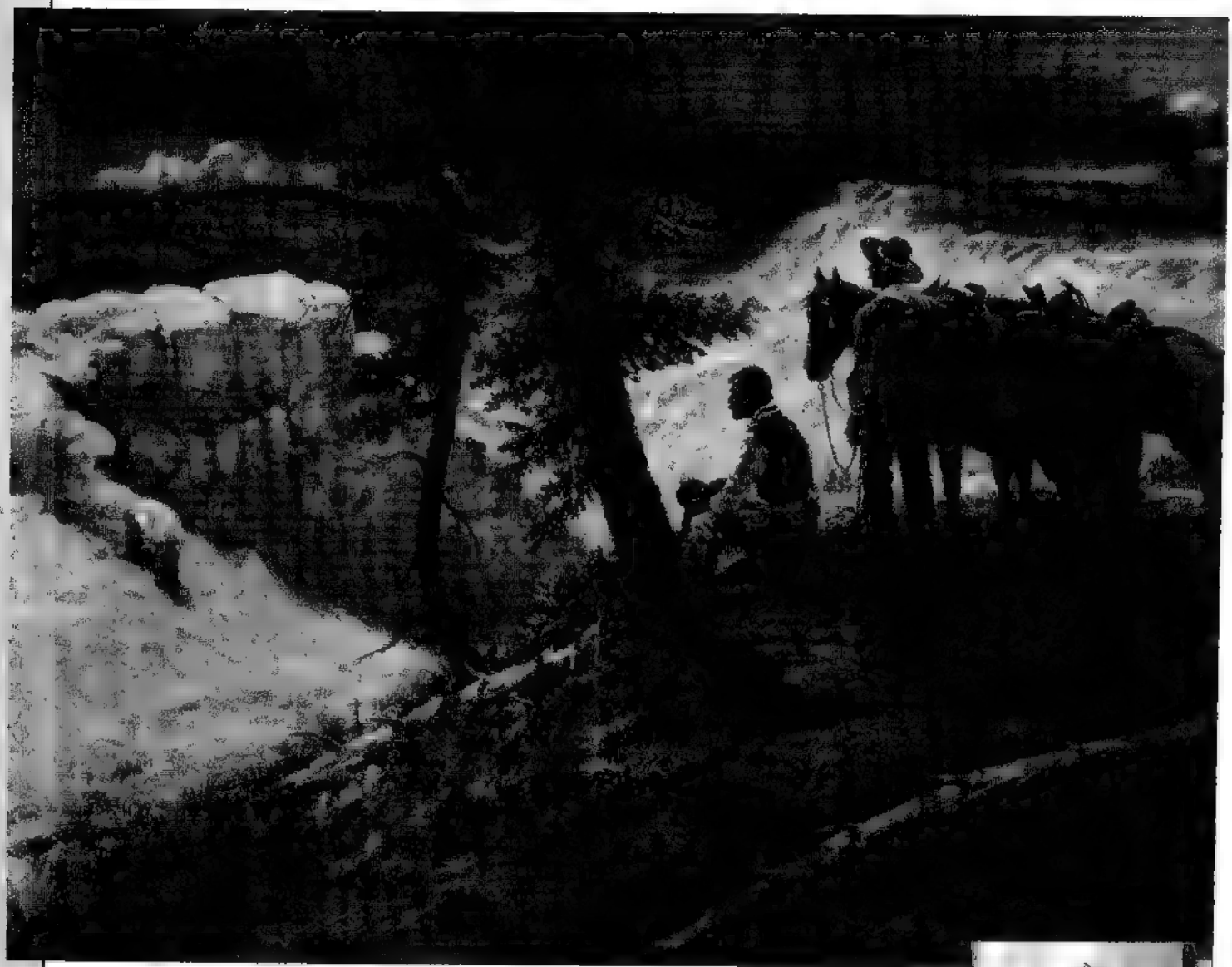
R. GIBBS, Buffalo, N. Y., writes: I have used your Burdock Blood Bitters with the best results, for Torpidity of the Liver; the effect was marvelous.

A frequent theme in Burdock's advertising was the headline, "Invalid Ladies! This is for You." Each bottle of Bitters contained 16% alcohol, with other herbs and roots providing a laxative effect. Burdock Blood Bitters was said to cure women of "hollow cheeks, pale faces, sunken eyes and feeble footsteps."

BY JAMES BISHOP, JR.

The Cowboy from Quawpaw

Joe Beeler—still making magic



On the Canyon Rim. ***Scene is the rough Robbers Roost country in central Utah, where the cowboys were so tough in the 1880s-90s that people called them "Bluff-tigers." For years, Butch Cassidy and his wild bunch of outlaws hid out there. Posses were never paid enough to go in and get them. Beeler has studied every aspect of those days and is now at work on another Robbers Roost piece. He's convinced that Butch, unlike the members of his gang, was not a killer until the very end. (Right) Artist Joe Beeler.***

– ALL IMAGES COURTESY JOE BEELER –

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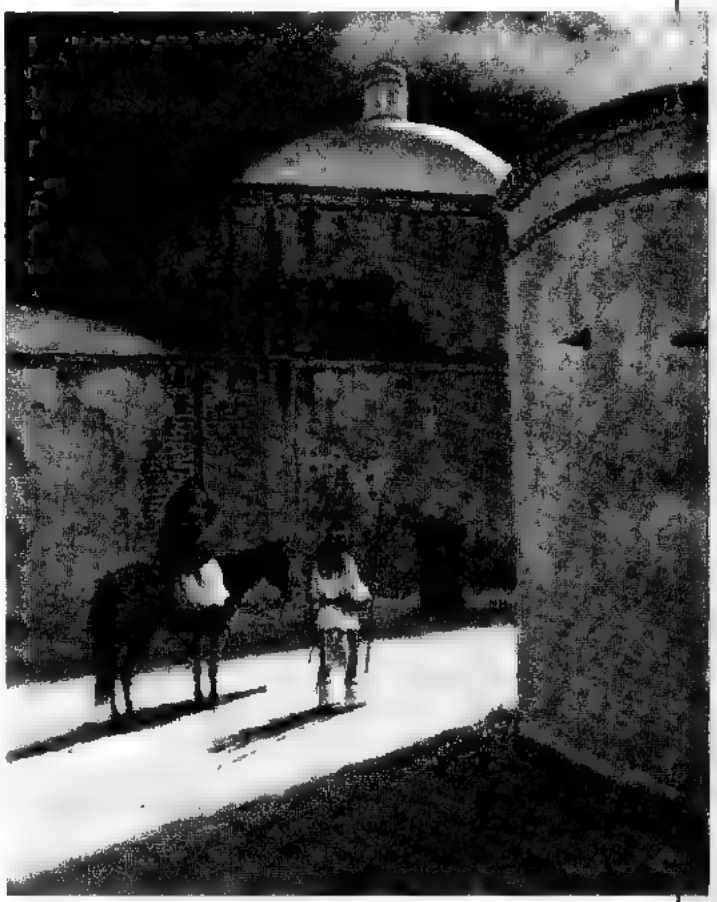


(Right)* Seeking a Man Named Jesus.** ***Scene is Tumacacori, Arizona, in the 1850s. A young Pueblo Indian has heard about Christianity. Thinking that he will meet Jesus, the Indian brings along his wife. Beeler was striving for a sense of whimsy with this piece. The Indian fully expects Jesus to be there to meet him and his wife.

Sure as sunup that the old clown death was near, cowboy artist Frank Polk got word to his lifelong pal Joe Beeler to sneak some whiskey into the hospital where he lay. Smuggling two tiny bottles in his boots past the nurse station, Beeler found his friend sucking on an oxygen hose, his face as gray as a winter day.

"What you doing, trying to die?" barked Beeler, as he poured a drop into Polk's mouth. "Listen," Polk wheezed, "I've been a cowboy and an artist all my life. I found out all this knowledge and I learned it all too late." With that, Polk's hands began to shake, his voice quavered. "Joe," Polk whispered, "you're standing on my oxygen hose."

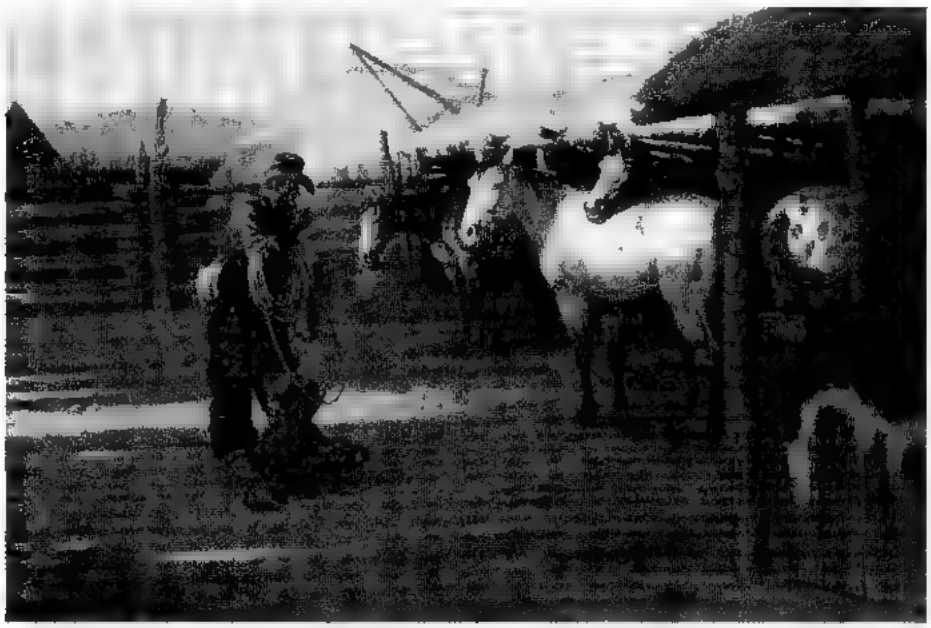
Early one morning last summer, I found Beeler—Joe, as everyone from millionaires to plumbers calls him—poking around outside his studio down a remote dirt road west of Sedona, Arizona. As usual, he was dressed like the cowpuncher he still is—dusty boots, black hat, worn jeans and a gray vest over a collarless white shirt. Four of Joe's horses were kicking up straw in a nearby corral. (Joe's favorite horse Banjo has since become lame, so although Joe still ropes at 73 years old, he's bowed out of team roping.)

Settling down inside his studio, Joe tugged on the rim of his black Stetson and after some pleasantries were exchanged, recalled his visit with Frank Polk. Then he said softly, "You know, sometimes I feel that way too, about the clock ticking faster. After painting and sculpting for more than 50 years, my eyes have been opened to new aspects of my craft, fresh challenges of color, technique—I'm always trying to do it the way it's not been done before."

Grocery magnate Eddie Basha, who owns the largest collection of Joe's art—more than 200 pieces—remembers when he first saw the man's work in 1970, "I was completely taken aback. It was magic. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. And I still get that feeling. His work just gets better. He's a man who doesn't just observe life, he participates in it."

For anyone who's nostalgic for the Old West, a few hours spent in Beeler's studio is a refreshing reminder that the past still exists in more than film and the imagination. Smelling of leather, paint and sweat, his creative wonderland is crowded with Comanche bows and arrows, steer and horse skulls, Lakota war bonnets, saddles, Winchesters, countless

(Above) Navajo Raiders. ***In the 1860s-70s, before the Navajos and other tribes were sent to reservations, they were infamous for rustling cattle, sheep and horses in New Mexico and Arizona. Beeler's research revealed that these raiders were so good, they altered livestock commerce in that region for years.***



(Above)* Fall Morning.** ***A peaceful Arizona morning on a working ranch in the 1930s. The cowboy has butchered a steer and is busy picking horses for the day's work.

(Right)* Spring Round Up.** ***A look at 1920s wrangling—horses in a remuda, roundup boss telling the cook where they'll stop for the night.

art history books, ropes and a dozen paintings and sculptures in various stages of completion. It is the world of a man who's at home in the realm of the cowboy, the Indian and the artist.

Growing up in Quawpaw, Oklahoma, near the foothills of the Ozarks, Joe discovered that he had the draftsman's gift before he was a teenager. Encouraged by his mother, he filled pages of notebooks with pencil sketches of Indians and cowboys, bulls and horses. His ideas came from characters, vistas and scenes he had seen with his own eyes. At 16, he sold his first painting

Whether the economy is up or down, his paintings sell for up to $125,000 and his sculptures for $300,000. "We have trouble keeping any of his art around here for very long. It sells," says Bill Rey of the Claggett/Rey Gallery in Vail, Colorado.

While many artists slow down at his age, Joe has never been busier—10 new major works a year, including a sculpture of Arizona's late Sen. Barry Goldwater, destined for Scottsdale. Joe himself has been immortalized in a larger-than-life sculpture created by Clyde Ross Morgan, which was chosen by popular vote to stand in uptown Sedona.

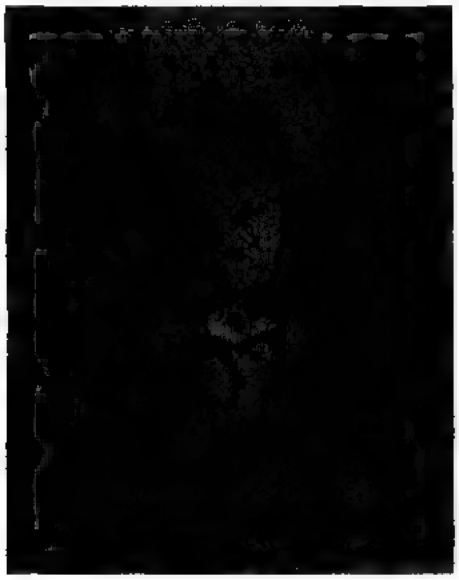
In the unlikely event that Joe were to stop painting and sculpting tomorrow, his legacy would be secure, since he's one of the founders of the Cowboy Artists of America in 1965. Its annual show and sale at the Phoenix Art Museum has become a yearly ritual that helps preserve Western history.

As Joe recounts it today, it all began sort of by accident in a bull session with Charlie Dye while they were branding cattle on a ranch down in Old Mexico. Eager for Western art to become more than just a regional fad, they jawed about various ways for it to become better appreciated. "We'd been wondering whether other guys—John Hampton and George Phippen—were doing the same thing we were," Beeler recalls. "Wouldn't it be fun if we could get together once in a while to talk about cowboys, the West, the days of Charlie Russell, truly the first cowboy artist, Frederic Remington and art."

Thanks to their friend, Western author Bob Mcleod, known for writing *Appaloosa*, bylaws were drawn up that were similar to those of the Coconino County sheriff's posse. Another good friend, the late author Elizabeth Rigby, took the famous photo that day in Bird's Tavern in uptown Sedona that eventually went around the world. Now the last man standing from that original group, Joe, quips, "Well, I always was the youngest."

But Joe Beeler is more than that. As Eddie Basha puts it, "Joe Beeler's soul *is* the spirit of the West."

James Bishop, Jr. is a Sedona-based author, great-grandson of a buffalo hunter and past chairman of the Sedona Arts Commission. His most recent book is *Epitaph for a Desert Anarchist: The Life and Legacy of Edward Abbey.*



(Above left) **Your Enemies are Mine.** ***Beeler grew up in Oklahoma with a Creek Indian named Will Sampson who later went on to appear in films like*** **The Outlaw Josey Wales** ***and*** **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.**

(Above right) **Buffalo Scouts.** ***Beeler created this at a ranch south of Laramie, Wyoming, on the Colorado border where 1,300 buffalo now thrive on what was once the hunting grounds 160 years ago for the Southern Cheyennes, Arapahos and Shoshonis. The three warriors are scouting the herd before one of them leaves to summon the hunters. They use lances and arrows even though rifles are available because an arrow marks a hunter's kill, whereas a bullet could be from anyone.***

BY CORINNE BROWN

Chaps—The Next Rage

"If clothes make the man (or woman), I'll take mine in chaps."

Everybody's seen 'em hanging on a fence post in-between rounds at the rodeo or on a peg in the bunkhouse—an ancient pair of nicely broken-in chaps covered with dust and horse snot, or those fancy show numbers with silver conchos and leather fringe. Not that they aren't pretty, or interesting to look at—they are.

But like a pair of B-52s, they don't do much for you on the ground. Ask a cowgirl—the secret's in the fit. Put a pair of these leather shields on the average guy, or better yet, catch 'em coming straight at you buckled around someone who's got on Wranglers and the moxie to go with 'em—then you'll understand the magic. Kind of like that sword Excalibur that makes a warrior out of anyone who can lift it, chaps have a way of . . . well, transforming the wearer.

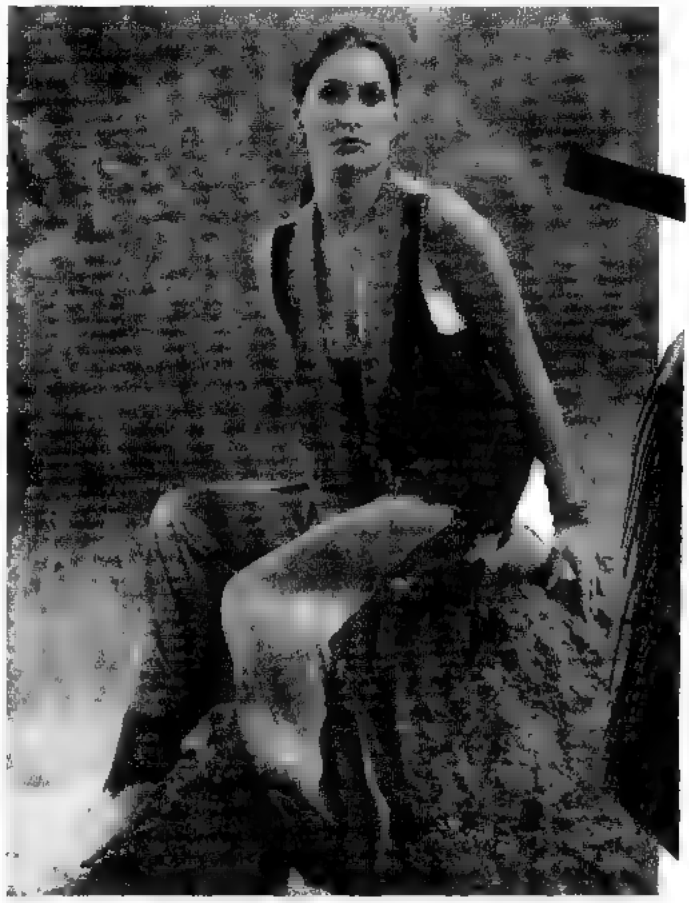
In fact, true believers, nothing stops a conversation between women faster than meeting a man in chaps. It's hard not to notice how the cut elevates a guy one step above a cowboy at Chippendale's. And I hate to sound sexist here, but I'm told the converse just doesn't happen when a woman is wearing them. And believe me, I've asked.

According to some men, chaps on women don't flatter at all, they merely detract. But some hip designers have created new chaps that shapen women's figures quite well, and may make these cowboys' heads turn after all.

Texas designer Patricia Wolf recently came out with a trio of Western party outfits for women: pink, purple and red suede, midriff-baring vests and highly decorated chaps, all worn over black bodysuits. The chaps stole the show at Denver's Western fashion market, although the look is one likely to be found only in Western closets.

Colorado roughstock PRCA cowboy Junior Ray wears Saddle Barn's fringed shotgun chaps.

BY CORINNE BROWN



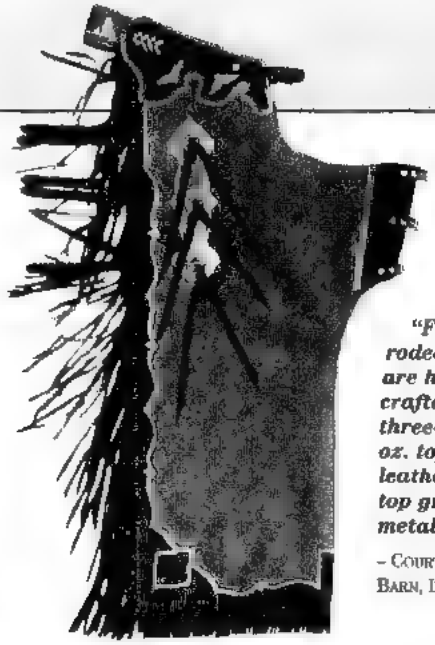
Jolie Salter wears deerskin suede silk chaps with sterling silver conchos and buckles. The chaps are worn over a cat suit, perfect for cowboy "black tie" events. The vest is lined to match the chaps and has Swarovski crystals sewn to the rough edges.

– DEBORAH DAVIS BREUNER LTD. DESIGNS; PHOTO BY DOUGLAS SCHNEEMAN –

But throw a pair of eye-catching macho-makers on the average cowpoke and it's another story. The effect of the flare and flirt of this funky work garment on a man's image may be the best kept secret on the range or (don't look now manufacturers) the source of the revival of Western wear.

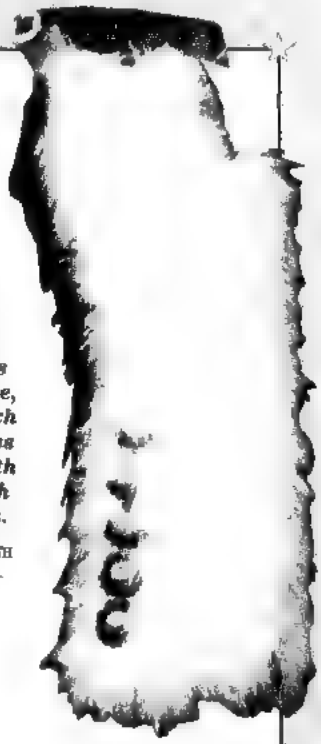
When you add that pair of chaps to your closet, make sure to throw away the black and white shaggy kind.

Corinne



"Finalist" rodeo chaps are hand-crafted from three- to four-oz. top grain leather with top grain or metallic fringe.

– Courtesy Saddle Barn, Inc.

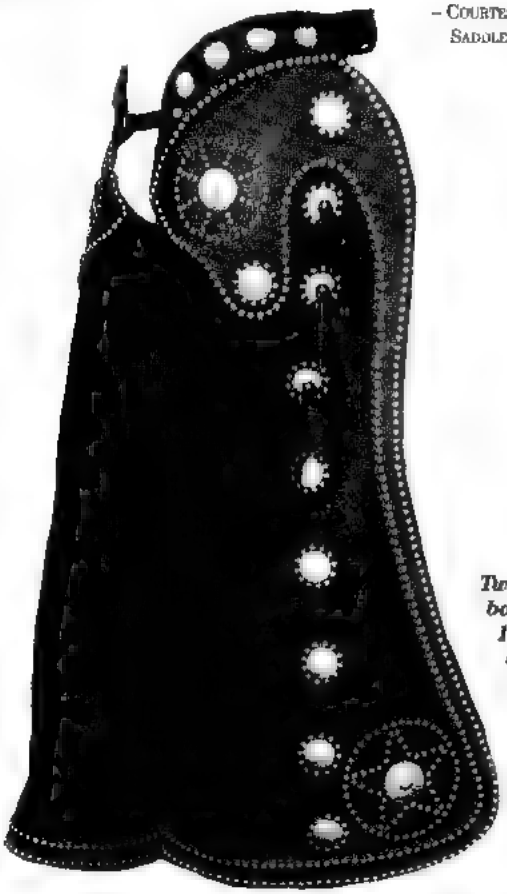


Handcrafted from five-oz. cowhide with curly buffalo wool, these woolies have twisted fringe, five conchos on each leg and solid brass hardware with buckle through closures.

– Courtesy Sawtooth Saddle Company –

Black body chinks with cut fringe, basket stamped tops and scrolls in natural oil, flap pockets and coin conchos.

– Courtesy Barstow Pro Rodeo Equipment, Inc.



Two-tone leather batwing chaps with 1300 nickel spots, 34 conchos and solid nickel hardware with buckle through closures.

– Courtesy Sawtooth Saddle Company

See our new resource guide on p.135.

Hatco's "Authentic X" to Reduce Counterfeits

It's official. By government decree, Hatco, maker of Stetson and Resistol Western headwear, now owns the quality designation "Authentic X's" trademark for all hats bearing its brand names.

The "x" standard rating system was begun by John B. Stetson over 135 years ago in order to distinguish between levels of material and workmanship in both straws and fur felt. Look for a hologram stating "Authentic X's" affixed to the sweatband, confirming quality levels from 4x to 5000x.

"Our retailers and consumers can be confident that buying our hats with the 'Authentic X's' hologram insures they are getting a quality product," said Thom Harris, president of Hatco. "Hopefully, this will create order in the 'X game' and reduce the amount of counterfeit and knockoff hats in the market."

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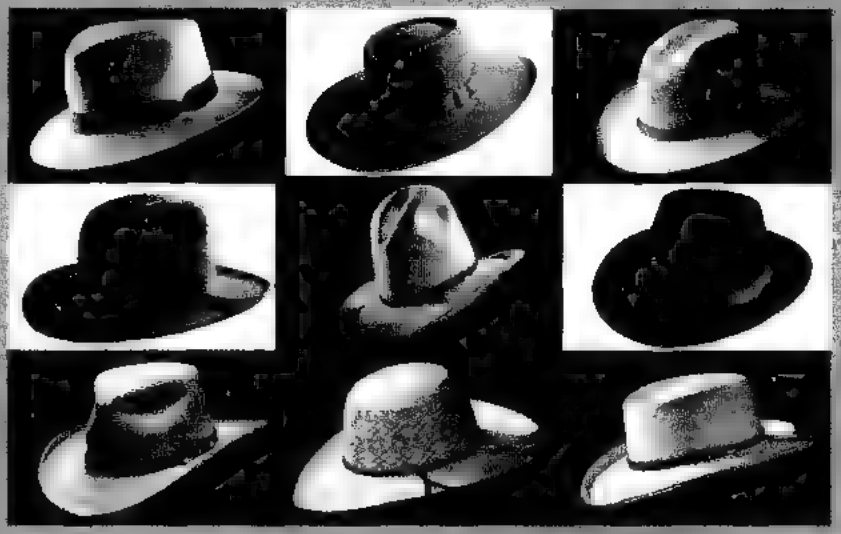

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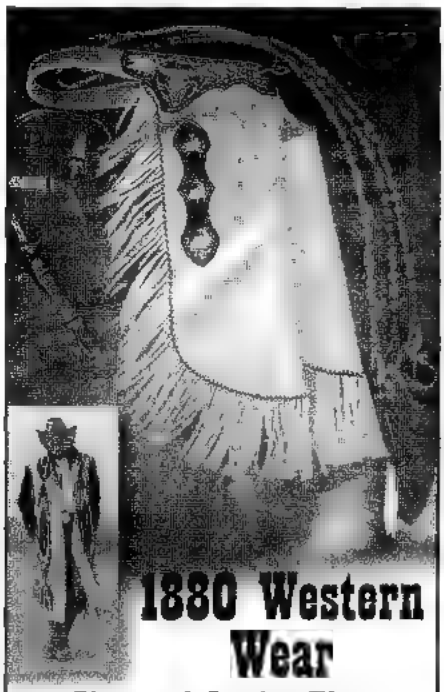

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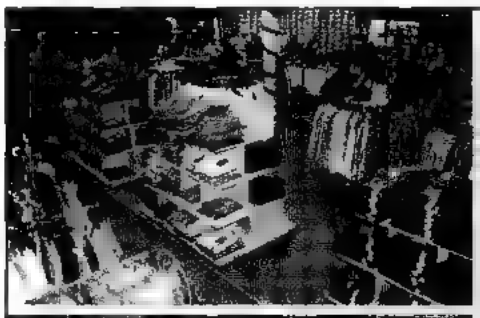

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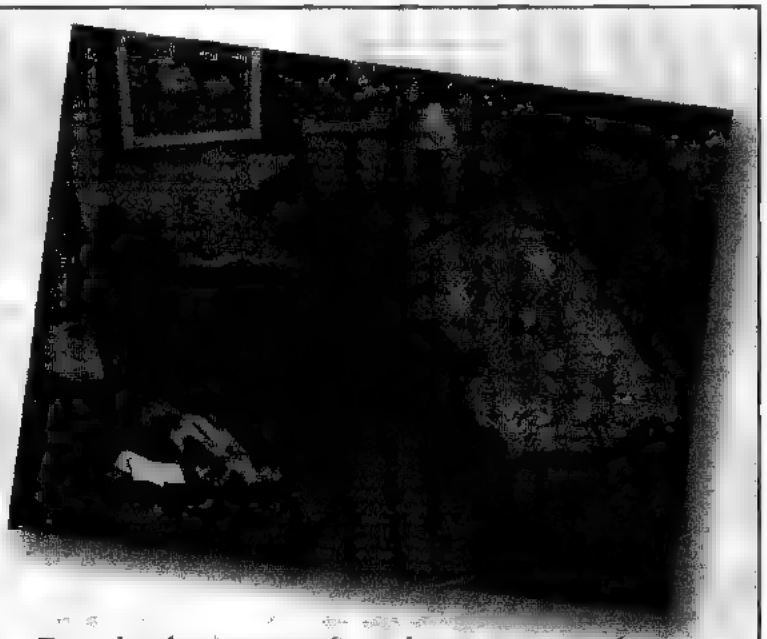

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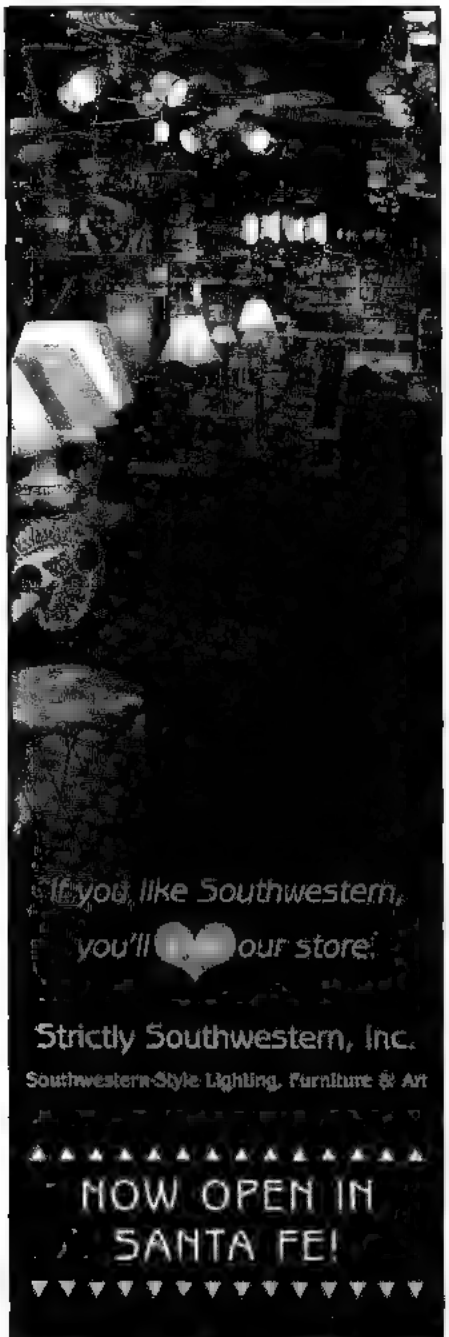

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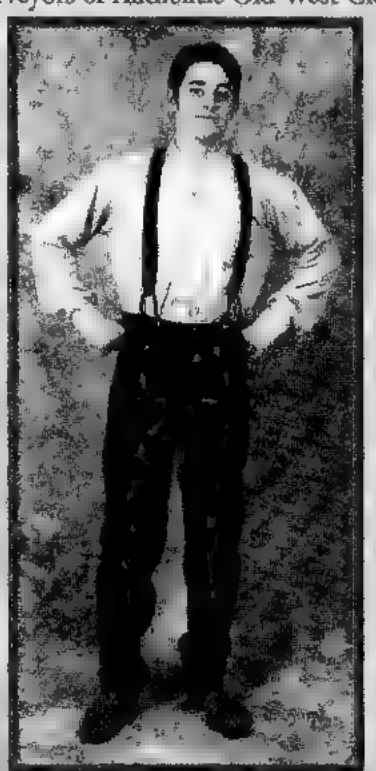

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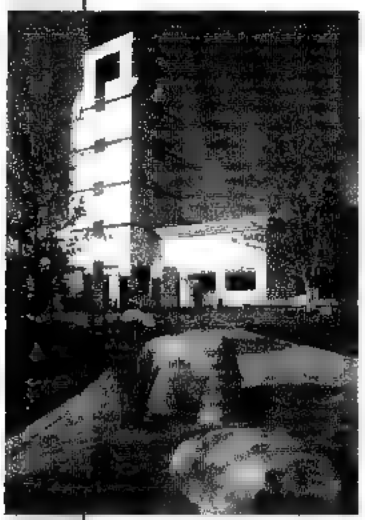
BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

Autry Museum of Western Heritage

Multicultural history shines through this "window into the West."

If you want a "window into the West," the best view is found at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles, California: a massive museum that explores the myths and realities of all the diverse populations that inhabited the American West.

Here you can go back in time to the Anasazi pueblos and the 49ers; you can learn about the Oregon Trail and how a continent was joined by a golden spike. The Buffalo Soldiers are here, as are tales of the Spanish conquistadors, along with poignant stories of Asian emigrants. You'll experience the lives of Lakotas, Osages and Cheyennes, and all who sought a better life in this new land.



Previous special exhibits at the Autry have looked at Japanese American women, Mexican Americans in popular media and artist Carl Rungius.

– COURTESY AUTRY MUSEUM OF WESTERN HERITAGE –

The Autry not only provides seven permanent galleries with over 51,000 objects, but an entire schedule of special events and exhibits.

"The West has historically been one of the most multicultural regions of the United States," says Executive Director John L. Gray. "As we explore their stories, we learn more about ourselves."

Since opening its doors in late 1988, the Autry has attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. After only three years in operation, it received accreditation from the prestigious American Association of Museums, which has been granted to only 738 of the nation's over 8,000 museums.

You'll want to see the Opportunity Gallery, which features the tools, clothing and decorative arts of Westward pioneers. The gallery also explores their interactions with Native Americans and Mexicans.

The Conquest Gallery covers the history and impact of the Indian wars, the buffalo slaughter and the technological improvements that helped link the nation.

The Community Gallery includes an extensive Colt firearms collection, as well as art and artifacts that show relationships within families, social groups and towns.

The Cowboy Gallery begins with Spanish roots and traces the history of those who rode the range.

The Romance Gallery has paintings, sculptures and artifacts that give us romanticized and idealized images of the West.

The Imagination Gallery includes film, radio, television, advertising and toys that show the myths of the West.

The McCormick Tribune Foundation Family Discovery Gallery takes you back to the streets of Los Angeles' Chinatown in 1937, where you can learn about the See family through an introductory video by Lisa See, whose 1995 book traces her family's four generations in California. Children can dress up in Chinese costumes, cook in a Chinese restaurant, make furniture, play family games and listen to an old-time radio show.

Special exhibits are continually planned. Currently showing—until Jan. 25, 2004—is *California Pottery: From Missions to Modernism.* This exhibit is an unprecedented assembly of pottery commercially produced in the state during the first half of the 20th century.

The Autry also includes a 215-seat Wells Fargo Theatre that showcases movie series, live performances and music. You can shop at the Autry Museum store and lunch at the Golden Spur Cafe. Serious students can apply for access to the Autry Research Center.

Visit www.autry-museum.org for more information.

"Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf."

- Will Rogers

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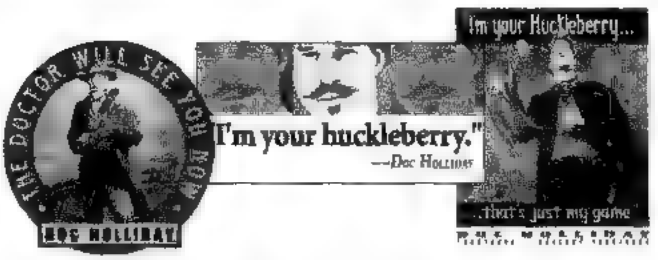

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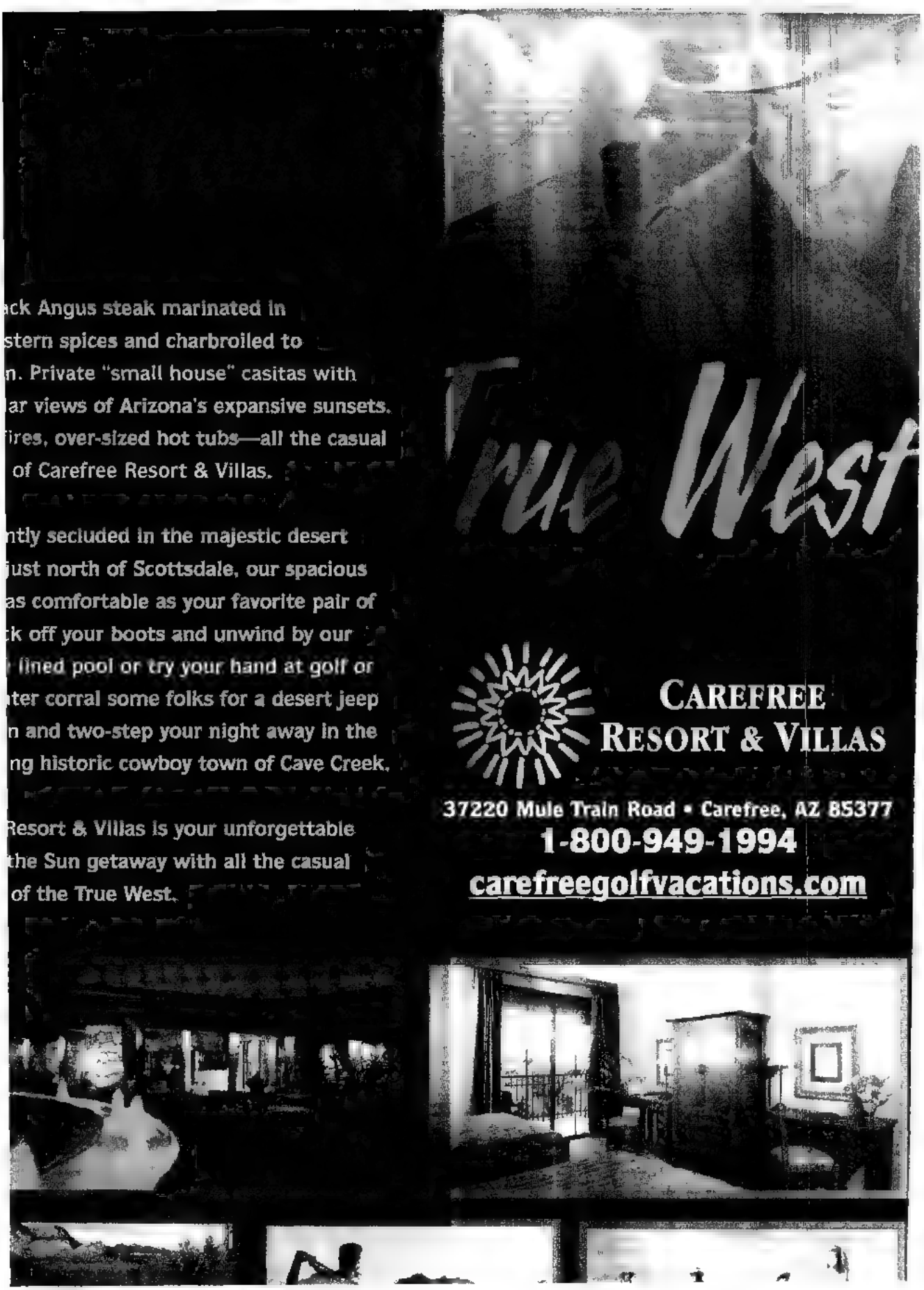

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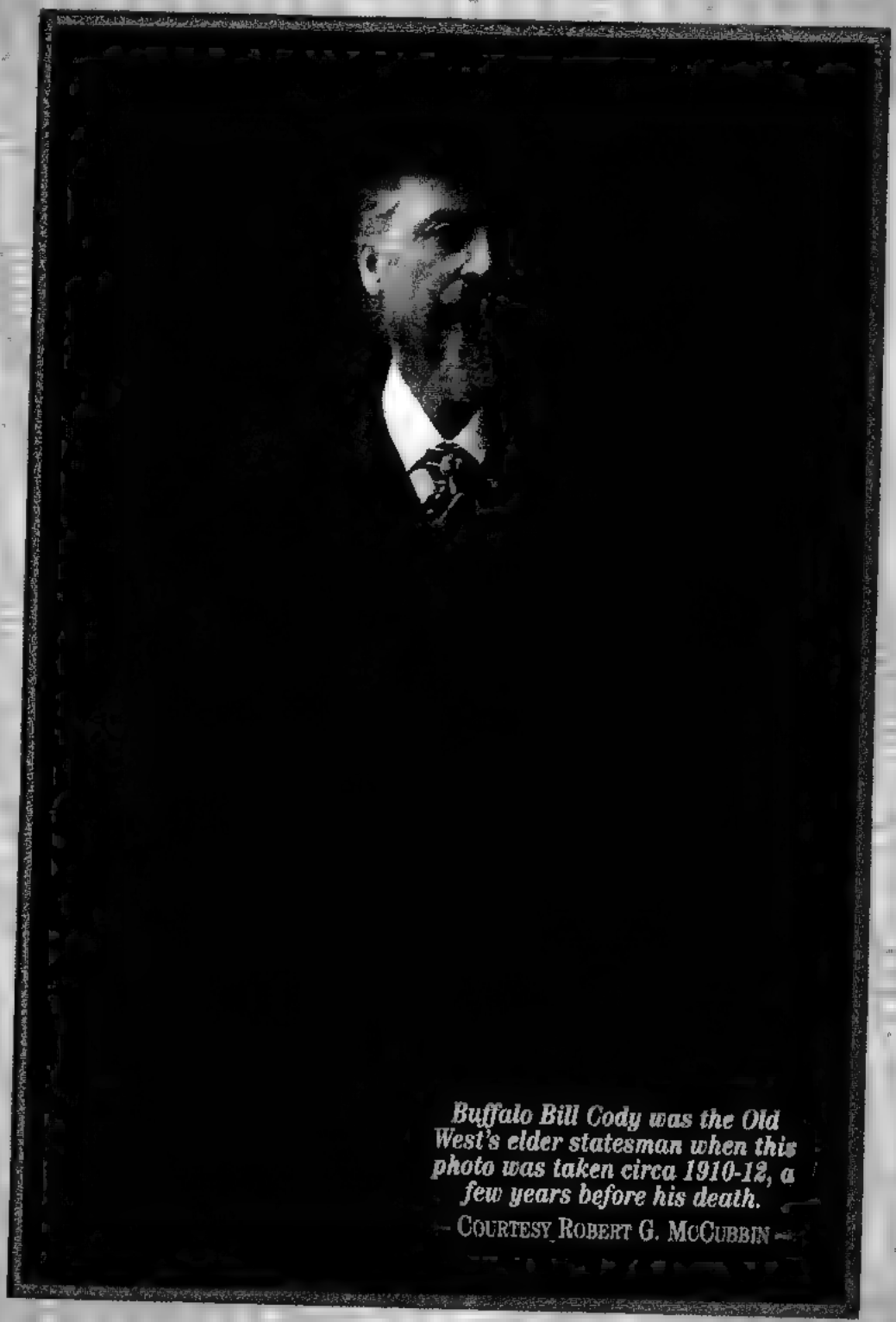

Buffalo Bill Cody was the Old West's elder statesman when this photo was taken circa 1910-12, a few years before his death.

— COURTESY ROBERT G. MCCUBBIN —

BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

Trailing Buffalo Bill

From Leavenworth, Kansas, to Denver, Colorado.

Love him or hate him, call him a hero, a drunken blowhard or a myth created by one awesome press agent, William Frederick Cody was—and is—the Old West.

Criminy, Buffalo Bill would be the first to laugh at all these revisionists trying to discredit him. He certainly had no reservations about telling big windies and often poked fun at himself.

I, for one, like Buffalo Bill. Sure, he stretched the truth, probably wasn't the easiest man to be married to and had more than his share of faults and demons, but, fraud or not, Bill Cody did more than anyone in his day—and many since—to create an everlasting image of the Wild West.

And face it. Who else would you rather have riding shotgun on a *Renegade Road*? After all, he'd be buying the drinks each night.

The Early Days: Leavenworth and the Pony Express

Although Cody was born in Scott County, Iowa, in 1845, our trip begins in Leavenworth, Kansas. I don't have anything against Iowa (except maybe Council Bluffs), and neither did Cody, but his adventures really began in Kansas.

In the summer of 1854, the family settled in nearby Salt Creek Valley. Thirteen weeks later, Cody's abolitionist father became a victim of "bleeding Kansas" when he was stabbed by a pro-slavery neighbor. Isaac Cody never fully recovered, and when he died in 1857, young Bill got a job to help support his family, first driving oxen to town, and later with the freight company of Russell, Majors & Waddell.

A good orientation into Cody's past starts at Leavenworth Landing Park with the walking Historical Wayside Tour. Modules explain old sites and personalities, from the Star of West Saloon to our own Buffalo Bill. His module is at Haymarket Square at Seventh and Cherokee.

Count on spending half a day in Leavenworth. Independence, Missouri, may take exception to Leavenworth's "Gateway to the West" claim, but there are plenty of sights for Western history buffs, including the restored 1882 Carroll Mansion, plus the Frontier Army Museum and Buffalo Soldier Monument at Fort Leavenworth. (A photo ID is required for fort access.)

From Leavenworth, head north on U.S. 73 and west on U.S. 36 for a quick stop in Marysville. No Buffalo Bill road trip is complete without a Pony Express fix, and this little burg has a gem: the Marysville Pony Express Barn—a museum and research library.

Hank Williams (insert "Your Cheatin' Heart" joke here) and Joseph H. Cottrell built this stone barn in 1859, and the following year leased the structure to Russell, Majors & Waddell as a livery stable for the 1860s version of FedEx. The actual station was at the Barrett Hotel, a block north at Eighth and Broadway.

Army Scout and Buffalo Hunter

From Marysville, it's south on U.S. 77 and into Manhattan, where we begin covering Cody's scouting career. Little remains of some of Cody's old army haunts (Zarah and McPherson, for instance), but other posts have survived. Fort Riley (Manhattan) and Fort Hays (Hays) are easy stops off Interstate 70. A little off the beaten path are Fort Harker (Ellsworth is a fun place to kill a couple of hours) and Fort Larned (a must stop for Santa Fe Trail enthusiasts).

With the Custer Home and U.S. Cavalry Museum, Fort Riley is a Seventh Cavalry mecca, while Hays

SIDE ROAD

Best of the Road

Lodging: Morning Star Bed & Breakfast (Manhattan, KS); Tea Rose Inn (Hays, KS); Knoll's Country Inn (North Platte, NE); Rocking Heart Elk Ranch (Chadron, NE), Pahaska Tepee Resort (Cody, WY); Irma Hotel (Cody, WY); Brown Palace Hotel (Denver, CO).

Dining: High Noon Saloon and Brewery (Leavenworth, KS); The Brick Wall (North Platte, NE); The Drifter's Cookshack (Crawford, NE); Maxwell's Restaurant (Cody, WY); Proud Cut Saloon (Cody, WY); Denver Buffalo Company (Denver, CO); Buckhorn Exchange (Denver, CO).

Shopping: Leavenworth Antique Mall (Leavenworth, KS); Drovers Mercantile (Ellsworth, KS); Buffalo Bill Historical Center (Cody, WY); Old West Antiques (Cody, WY); Harry Jackson Studios (Cody, WY); Cry Baby Ranch (Denver, CO); Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum & Grave (Golden, CO).

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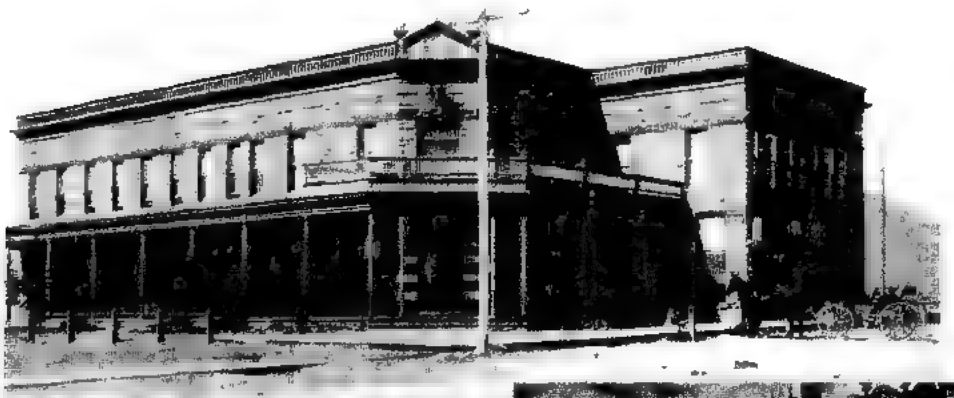


Named for his daughter, Buffalo Bill built the Irma Hotel (above) in 1902 because he believed that a town could never become great without a grand hotel. The hotel cost $80,000 to build, but it was soon embellished with a $100,000 cherrywood bar (right)—a gift from Queen Victoria.

COURTESY IRMA HOTEL

SIDE ROAD

Beecher's Island

Cody called this "one of the severest battles ever fought with the Indians"—and he wasn't bragging about something he did. He had never been to Beecher's Island, and never claimed to have been either.

In September 1868, Maj. George Forsyth and 50 volunteer scouts engaged 600 Sioux and Cheyennes, led by Roman Nose, on the Arikaree Fork of the Republican River. Forsyth and his men took shelter on an island, repelled several charges and dug in for a siege. They were later rescued by the 10th Cavalry.

The island is no more—victim of a 1935 flood—but the battlefield is marked by a monument south of Wray, Colorado, in Yuma County. Few people make the visit, so chances are you'll be alone as the haunting wind whistles warnings to watch out for rattlesnakes.

is filled with Buffalo Bill sightings. At the old fort grounds, now a state historic site, you can picture Cody chasing the small buffalo herd fenced in just across the highway. He would probably be glad he wound up in the Ellis County Historical Society Museum instead of Kansas' first Boot Hill. (Although, he'd be upset to learn that sarsaparilla, not Bass Ale, is served at the museum.)

Fort Hays' officers backed Cody in his famous (or fictional) buffalo-hunting match against Billy Comstock, who was cheered on by officers from Fort Wallace. The latter fort is now home to a small museum and cemetery down the road in Wallace, Kansas.

According to Mrs. Cody's memoirs, the match was advertised in a poster as the "Grand Excursion to Fort Sheridan, Kansas Pacific Railroad. Buffalo shooting match for $500 a side and the championship of the world between Billy Comstock (the famous scout) and W.F. Cody (Buffalo Bill), famous buffalo killer for the Kansas Pacific Railroad."

Monument is the likely site of the contest, so after we pay tribute to the shooting match (won by Cody, 69-46), it's on to Oakley, Kansas—spitting distance from Monument. The Fick Fossil and History Museum's Buffalo Bill display includes an oil painting of the scene and a Charlie Norton sculpture of Cody charging a buffalo on his favorite horse, Brigham. A larger-than-life sculpture is in the works.

Rest for a Scout and the Indian Wars

Cody once said champagne was a good drink on the Kansas prairie, but I'll settle for Gatorade because it's goodbye Kansas and hello Nebraska as the road takes me north on U.S. 83 to North Platte and the Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park & State Recreation Area—a mighty big name for a 25-acre park.

Nebraskans, though, can cram a lot into 25 acres. Built during the heyday of Cody's Wild West tours, the Scout's Rest ranch house and barn are meticulously restored and showcase "a wealth of Cody memorabilia."

The house was built in 1886 for $3,900 by contractor Patrick Welsh. Cody's sister Julia Goodman and husband Al Goodman, who managed the then 4,000-acre spread, had most of the say in how the house looked, but Cody insisted on having both a parlor and a bathroom in the bedroom—an added comfort for a hard-drinking frontiersman. An addition to the house was constructed in 1909.

From Scout's Rest, Cody's trail heads west on Interstates 80 and 76 to Colorado. In Julesburg, another Cody hangout, check out the Fort Sedgwick Depot Museum and Visitors Center, where you'll see Brenda Jean Daniher's Pony Express tribute in bronze, "God Speed to the Boy and the Pony." Then it's over to Sterling and south on State Highway 61 to the Summit Springs battlefield site.

Rock Creek Station

Any Buffalo Bill feast requires at least one Wild Bill appetizer, so get your fill at Rock Creek Station State Historical Park and State Recreation Area near Fairbury, Nebraska.

In 1861, James Butler Hickok (not yet known as Wild Bill), or someone else, shot and killed David McCanles and his gang at this Pony Express station.

The station has since been restored with a visitor's center, interpretative facilities and it has visible Oregon Trail ruts.

Information: 402-729-5777, www.ngpc.state.ne.us/parks/rockcrk.html

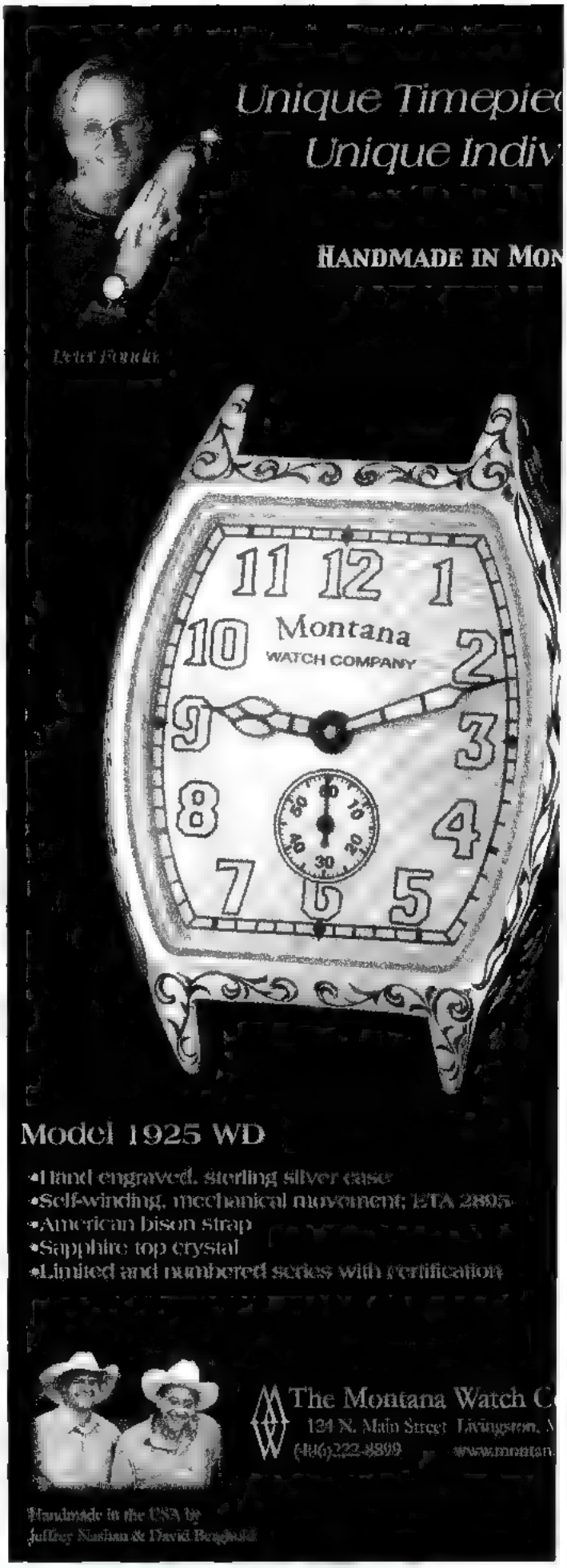
In the summer of 1869, Cody led the Fifth Cavalry in pursuit of Tall Bull's Cheyenne Dog Soldiers after the Indians raided along Kansas' Solomon River. The forces clashed here and Cody killed Tall Bull.

Okay, maybe Frank North killed Tall Bull, but this is a Buffalo Bill *Renegade Road*, and I'm backing my hero—as do most historians—even though a marker here gives North the credit. Little is here except range land, but it's easy to picture what happened on that July day. It's also easy to picture a rattler taking a bite out of my thigh, so let's move on.

East of Sterling, take Colorado 113/Nebraska 19 to eastbound I-80, then head north on U.S. 385 into Sioux Country. If it's open, take a few minutes to visit the Museum of the Fur Trade in Chadron—the Bordeaux Trading Post was in business from 1837-76—before traveling west on U.S. 20 to Crawford and Fort Robinson.

Near Crawford is the site of perhaps Cody's most famous Indian encounter. At Warbonnet Creek on July 17, 1876, Cody and the Fifth Cavalry intercepted a party of Cheyennes trying to join forces with the Little Bighorn winners, and in the brief skirmish, Cody killed Yellow Hair/Yellow Hand—"first scalp for Custer" in a duel immortalized by Cody (who else?) and artist Charlie Russell.

Markers commemorating the Warbonnet Creek fight and Cody's duel are in the Oglala National Grassland north of Crawford near Toadstool Park.



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– By Karen A. Roulston –

Fort Laramie

Gold and land seekers stopped here. So did Pony Express riders, Overland Stage employees and passengers, scouts, cowboys, gunfighters and, naturally, soldiers and Indians.

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Information: 307-837-2221; www.nps.gov/fola/

Check out road conditions and get detailed directions from the Pine Ridge Ranger District Office three miles south of Chadron on U.S. 385.

Whatever you do, give yourself plenty of time at Fort Robinson State Park and Museum, three miles west of Crawford on U.S. 20, as this is the site where Sioux warrior Crazy Horse was bayoneted to death.

Naturally, a longer trip would take us into South Dakota to the Standing Rock Indian Reservation near Mobridge and Sitting Bull's grave. In 1890, Cody tried to visit (and arrest) Sitting Bull—who had toured with Cody's Wild West in 1885—in order to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Ghost Dance scare. Cody's trip has been degraded as a publicity stunt and classified as just

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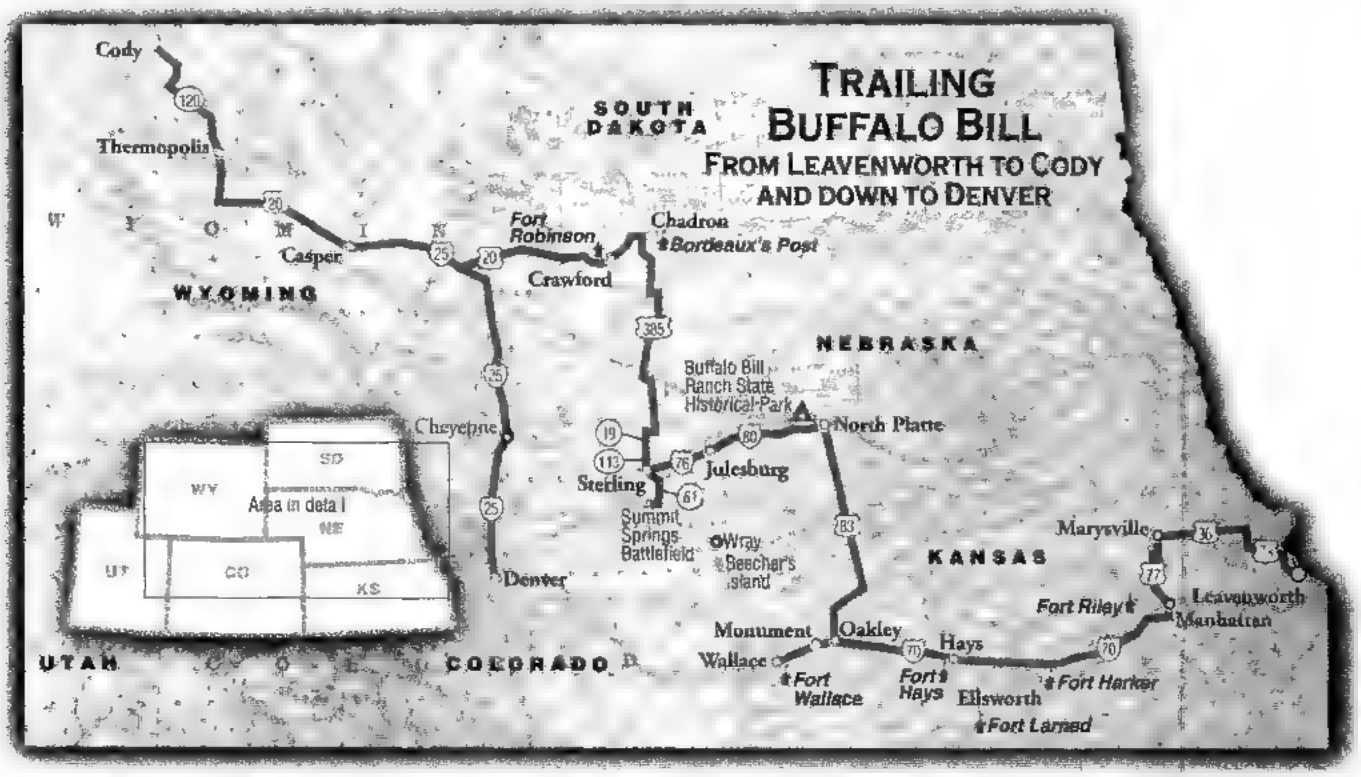


another drunken Cody outing. After Cody was sent home, Sitting Bull was killed and the Indian Wars came to a tragic, violent end at Wounded Knee.

Definitely not a time when Bill Cody was at his best, so I'm skipping that leg and enjoying Fort Robinson.

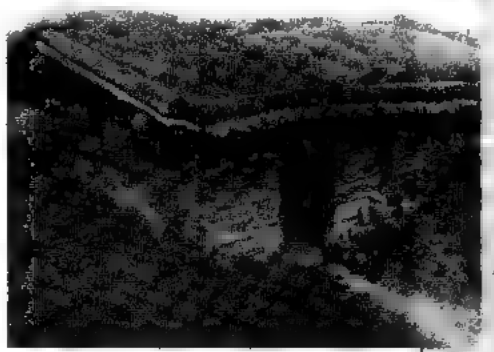
Living Legend and Hotel Owner

Keep traveling west on U.S. 20 to Thermopolis, Wyoming, then north on Wyoming 120 to the town that bears Cody's name and is home to one of the best Western museums anywhere: the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

You'll need at least two days to see the museum and area, but luckily Bill Cody was a man of vision. When Cody, Wyoming, was laid out in 1895, our hero foresaw it as the gateway to Yellowstone National Park, so in 1902, he had "just the sweetest hotel that ever was" built to entertain all those tourists. The Irma Hotel may not be a five-star resort, but it's still the best place to experience the man, myth and town. Make sure you check out the collection of historical buildings at Trail Town (the original site of Cody City).

End of Trail for Buffalo Bill

From Cody, it's time for our final leg—a long drive to Denver. Cody was a figure in early 1900s Denver, often telling stories and lifting glasses at the Buckhorn Exchange and the Brown Palace Hotel. The Buckhorn remains popular with locals and tourists looking for grub and cowboy music, and if you haven't hung your hat at the Brown, you're missing out on pure luxury—and a substantial figure charged to your credit card.



Bordeaux's Trading Post replica is found at the Museum of the Fur Trade in Chadron, Nebraska. Pierre Chouteau Jr., & Co. owned and operated this post until 1849. James Bordeaux operated the post until 1872. Francis Boucher was next in line, until the U.S. Cavalry confiscated illegal ammunition at the trading house in 1876, leading him to abandon the post. Descendants of Bordeaux and Boucher helped reconstruct the replica in 1955.

BY KAREN A. ROBERTSON

On January 10, 1917, Bill Cody died in Denver. His body lay in state at the capitol rotunda, where 25,000 people passed to pay their final respects to, in Teddy Roosevelt's words, "an American of Americans." Cody was buried atop Lookout Mountain in nearby Golden, my last stop.

The Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave may be overshadowed by the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, but it's a fine museum filled with displays illustrating Cody's life and career. Yeah, the BBHC has the Cody Firearms Museum, but Golden has Buffalo Bill himself.

Golden's also home to Coors Brewery, which offers tours and beer samples. That sounds like the perfect end to this long *Renegade Road*. Something tells me that Buffalo Bill would agree.

Johnny D. Boggs is working on a novel, *East of the Border*, about the stage career of Buffalo Bill Cody, Wild Bill Hickok and Texas Jack Omohundro. It's due out in December 2004 from Five Star

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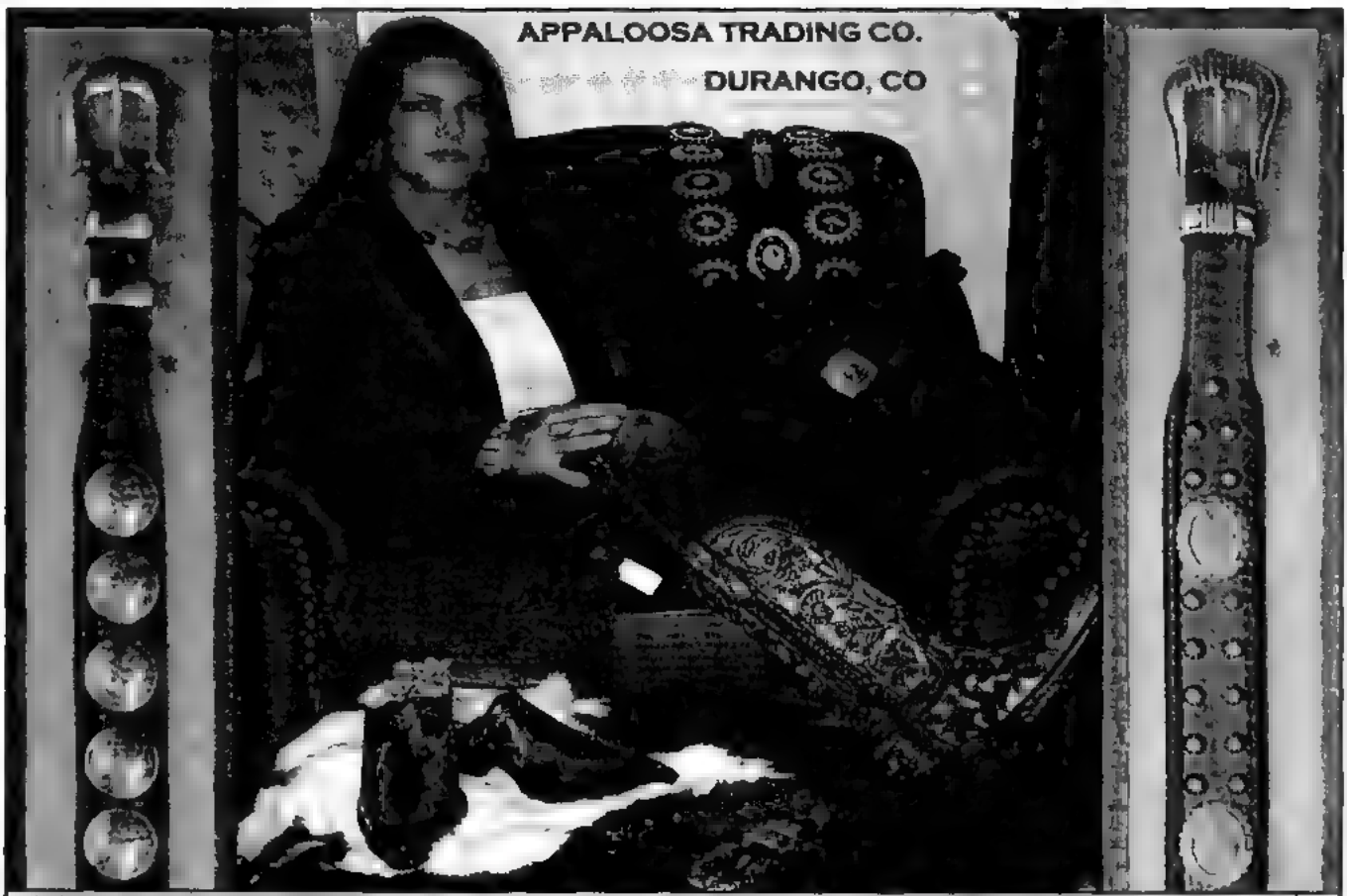

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BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

Riding the Rails

Take a day trip to Durango, Colorado.

"It's out of the way," Will Rogers said of Durango, "and glad of it."

Out of the way, perhaps, but Durango, Colorado, has been attracting all kinds since it took root in the early 1880s: cowboys, Indians, railroad workers and miners back then; bikers, musicians, kayakers and skiers today.

Yet this city of 14,000 remains distinctly Western—so Western that Louis L'Amour banged out some of his novels in the circa-1887 Strater Hotel.

Some 200,000 tourists ride the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad each year, and if you do only one thing in Durango, take the train ride. Locomotives pull coaches through the San Juan Mountains on 36-inch tracks (parts of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* were filmed here). It's a three-hour trip to the old mining town of Silverton.

For sightseeing, Durango has much to offer. The Children's Museum of Durango (802 E. Second Ave.) and Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum (479 Main Ave.) are good side trips, but the best museum is the Animas Museum (3065 W. Second Ave.). The museum is located in a 1904 school with several exhibits, a gift shop and its main feature: an 1870s log cabin.

The top gallery in town is Toh-Atin (145 W. Ninth St.), which offers Southwestern art ranging from kachinas and Navajo weavings to jewelry and paintings. The Martin Roll Gallery (635 E. Second Ave.) and New West Galleries (747 Main Ave.) may appeal to modern Westerners.

For such a small city, Durango is a great cultural mecca, as it supports a variety of festivals, quality restaurants and great hotels, including the historic Strater and General Palmer. On the other hand, don't expect to find the shopping on par with Scottsdale, Arizona. The Polo Ralph Lauren Factory Store (110 E. Fifth St.) has great deals on clothing—if you don't mind Ralph's logo on your duds—while O'Farrell of Durango (399 Camino Iglesia) sells quality, high-end custom hats and J.B. Hill boots. You'll also find quaint, eclectic stores on Main Avenue, although they don't offer a lot in the antique department.

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad operates in the winter and summer, taking passengers to breathtaking Cascade Canyon.

– COURTESY JOHNNY D BOGGS

After your shopping jaunt, get outdoors. Durango boasts a myriad of horseback riding outfitters, jeep tours, fishing guides and nearby guest ranches. Mesa Verde National Park is only 35 miles west. Heck, this city's where the former state record brown trout was pulled out of the "Gold Medal" Animas River just behind the Burger King.

Maybe Durango's out of the way, but it's one of Colorado's best finds.

Johnny D. Boggs believes Colorado burgs have, per capita, the most brew pubs in America and Durango's no exception

"I would have made a good Pope."

- Richard Nixon

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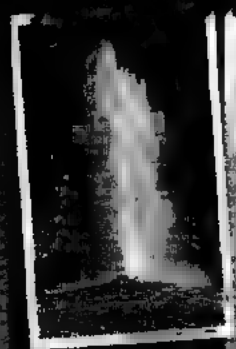

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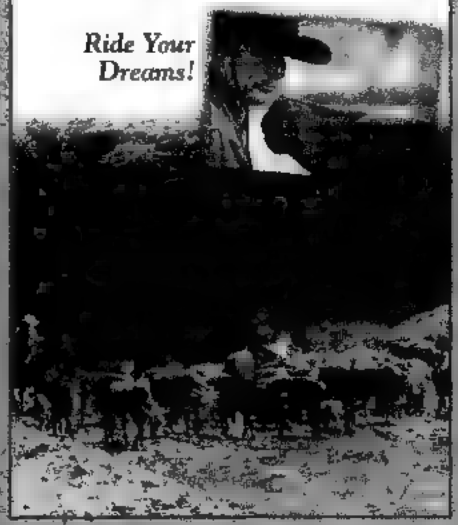

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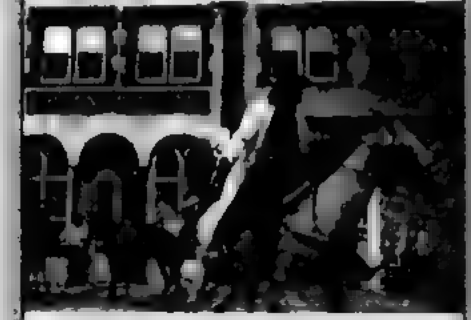

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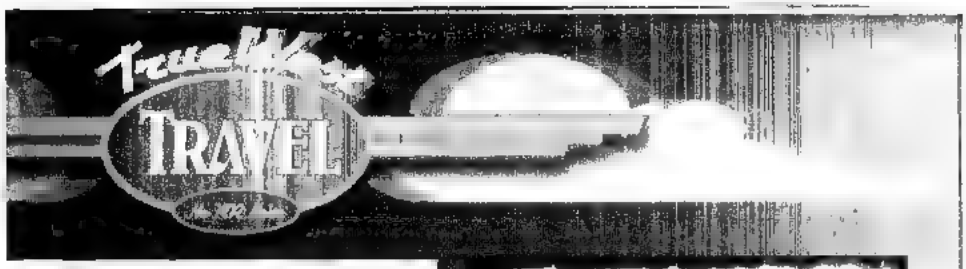

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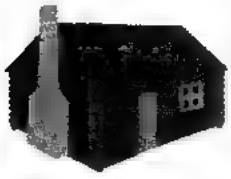

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BY CANDY MOULTON

From Church Dreamer to Western Novelist

Jon Chandler describes the West as we know it.

Jon Chandler recognized his creative gift when he was a youngster in church. "I received an illustrated copy of *The Iliad* for children . . . I'd sit in those hard old pews at the Calvary Baptist Church each Sunday and draw Greek and Trojan heroes on my Bible study materials while Pastor Shea droned on."

When his father bought the family a hi-fi, his creative energy really got a boost. "I could play records—there were country records by Johnny Cash, Marty Robbins and Frankie Laine with Western story songs that knocked me down. At about that time, Louis L'Amour was cranking out Westerns with incredible speed, and I'd check the book rack at the Western Auto store constantly for new titles."

As his creativity took off, Chandler first wrote songs that tended to be novellas. He started a career in public relations and marketing, taking breaks from preparing annual reports to write fiction. "It was a release, and I found I was pretty good at it."

Chandler's first novel, *The Spanish Peaks*, earned him the Medicine Pipe Bearer's Award for best first novel from Western Writers of America. And he's just released his second novel, *Wyoming Wind*, a dynamic story of the legendary range detective Tom Horn.

A rumor still floats around Wyoming that Tom Horn didn't die on the gallows in Cheyenne in November 1903. Horn's powerful friends in state government and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association may have staged Horn's hanging and his coincidental disappearance. Chandler uses that premise in his plot.

Not content to weave a story focusing only on Horn's deeds, Chandler tells the saga in a choreographed play of words, mingling past with present as he delves into Horn's psyche.

"It's tough getting to know and represent a character like Horn in a fictional fashion," Chandler says. "Everyone seems to have a proprietary interest in the guy, and they often don't like anyone messing around with their preconceived images."

In his latest book, Jon Chandler psychoanalyzes Old West range detective Tom Horn.

– COURTESY JON CHANDLER –

Chandler knows a bit about the frontier and outlaws, and is a past president and current director of the new Hole-in-the-Wall Gang that was founded by *Denver Post* columnist Red Fenwick. Chandler even wrote the group's theme song "Through the Gap."

Chandler's explorations of Western landscape serve him well. His descriptive ability is most evident in *The Spanish Peaks*. "I've had people who read *The Spanish Peaks* tell me they knew [La Veta Pass] well, and that I had described it dead on, from the foliage to the afternoon rains."

Though he views his future as a novelist, singing and songwriting won't be abandoned. "There's a lot more work involved in writing novels, but the minimalist aspects of creating something of worth in a mere couple of hundred words and a catchy melody is pretty compelling," Chandler says.

Chandler's newest CD *Sepia Soul* (reviewed p. 118) is now out and he is working on three more. He's also finishing two novels: *He Was No Hero*, a story of Pearl Heywood, and *The Diamond Country*, a sequel to *The Spanish Peaks*. A hard church pew may have awakened Chandler's creativity, but Western skies and plains are the lifeblood of his stories.

Candy Moulton makes her home near Encampment, Wyoming, where Kels Nickell relocated his family in July 1901, after the death of his son Willie, who was allegedly killed by Tom Horn

"There's many a bestseller that could have been prevented by a good teacher."

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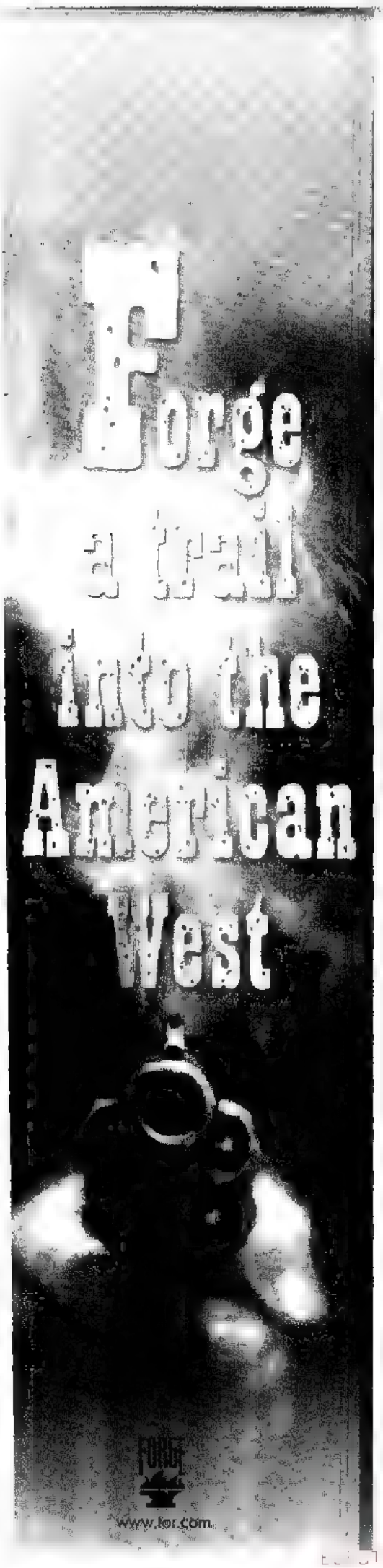

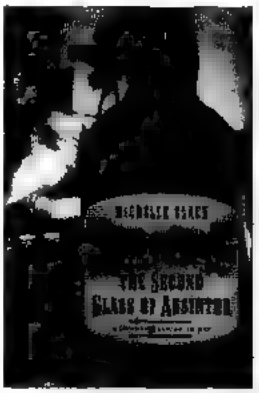

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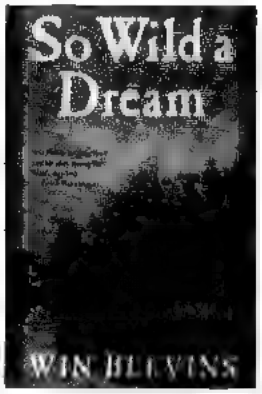

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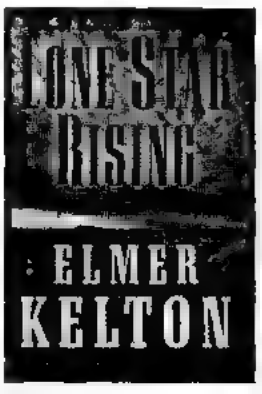

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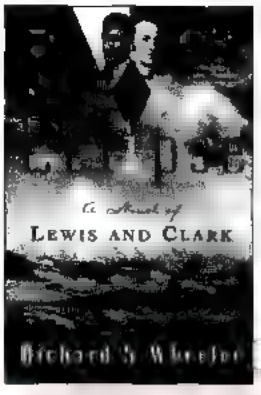

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NONFICTION

BIG BEND PICTURES

JAMES H. EVANS, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS, $39.95, HARDCOVER.

After you flip through these pictures of life in Big Bend—an 801,000-acre state park that includes the surrounding border towns on the Texas-Mexico boundary—you'll come across a gem: the stories behind the pictures. The pictures liven up with Evans' descriptions of his encounters. Oftentimes, quirky yet well-written stories such as Juan Valdez's force you to flip back to see their truth in the pictures. Evans' reverent homage to Big Bend's culture may inspire you to search out the beauty of your piece of America, too. —MEGHAN SAAR

IN THE HANDS OF THE GREAT SPIRIT

JAKE PAGE, FREE PRESS, $30.00, HARDCOVER.

The author of this excellent book makes use of archaeology and legend to extend the story of America's Indians back 20,000 years, way before New Mexico's Clovis and Folsom arrow makers. *True West* readers will probably prefer the middle of his text, say, from Braddock to Geronimo. Instead of an appended, bare-bones bibliography, Page gives us a careful evaluation of the best books that he has found for his study. —RICHARD H. DILLON

JOHN BIDWELL AND CALIFORNIA

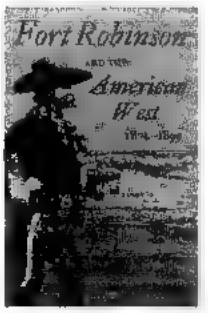
MICHAEL J. GILLIS AND MICHAEL F. MAGLIARI, ARTHUR H. CLARK COMPANY, $39.50, HARDCOVER.

This 1841 California pioneer played a leading role in the settlement and eventual statehood of our 31st state. From the Bear Flag Revolt through the Mexican War to his beloved Rancho Chico, Bidwell lived California history. A keen observer, a practical entrepreneur and a man of the people, Bidwell not only served his state in the political arena, but he left us all a rich tapestry of California history. My only quibble is that the high price may deter readers from an otherwise great history of California. —LINDA WOMMACK

FORT ROBINSON AND THE AMERICAN WEST, 1874-1899

THOMAS R. BUECKER, UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS, $19.95, SOFTCOVER.

For 25 years, Fort Robinson garrisoned between 300 and 3,000 soldiers. The fort served as a staging area for some of the most intense Indian War conflicts: the Great Sioux War, Cheyenne outbreak, rise of the Ghost Dancers and the massacre at Wounded Knee. The author, who is also curator of the Fort Robinson Museum, weaves together reminiscences, correspondence and official records to create a revealing study of this turbulent, lonely outpost. He exposes conflicts between agents of the U.S. government as well as the flux of Indian accommodation and Indian resistance. *Fort Robinson and the American West* offers dramatic stories and details that will appeal to both historians and aficionados of the West. —CYNTHIA GREEN



TAMING THE ELEPHANT

EDITED BY JOHN F. BURNS AND RICHARD J. ORSI, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, $29.95, SOFTCOVER.

Post-gold rush California, especially the public sector, has been seen by many as one long disaster: a time of erratic if not downright crooked politicians, who seemed to prove that a selfish electorate got what it deserved. These essays tend to soften that judgment as they reveal the state did not perform all that badly—its major failing being the lack of environmental and civil rights protection. Most interesting are chapters by Roger McGrath on crime and law enforcement, and Robert Chandler on the Feds' role in early California. A real bonus is the extensive bibliography that readers can fish out of the notes at each chapter's end. —RICHARD H. DILLON

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SHAMANISM IN NORTH AMERICA

NORMAN BANCROFT HUNT, FIREFLY BOOKS, $49.95, HARDCOVER.

According to Native American belief, power is found in one's ability to influence events and shamans are the most capable of conversing with nature's spirits. Hunt's book examines the shamans by region and offers detailed photographs of actual drawings, carvings, dolls, masks and more. From Kachinas to the war pony to the horned toad, Hunt's treatise of shamanism deftly encapsulates the power that still attracts about half of Native Americans to the practice today. —MEGHAN SAAR

FICTION

THE CALLINGS

HENRY CHAPPELL, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, $24.95, HARDCOVER.

To the settlers of Texas and the high plains, the Comanche threat had long been as deadly as the towering storms lurking along the horizon. Though rigorous army patrols had diminished such human terrors, fierce pockets of resistance remained. A vast change came with the decimation of the great buffalo herds, which the author highlights by taking readers through the day-to-day life of a young buffalo hunter and a sturdy, old Comanche war chief. When the reader turns the last page of this haunting drama, he'll have realized valor has no boundaries. —BILL GARWOOD

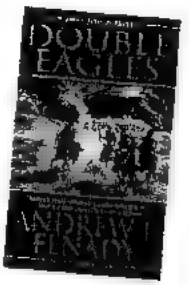
CALL TO GLORY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A TEXAS RANGER

MICHAEL J GILHULY AND MARILYN GILHULY, LONGSTREET PRESS, $25.00, HARDCOVER.

The Gilhulys present a gripping account of the Wiley Brothers, who were Texas Rangers at a time when many of their fellow Rangers had left for the Civil War. The saga begins when the two elder brothers, Leroy and Carter, set out to rescue their younger sibling from a Union prison camp. Intelligence and perseverance are the brothers' strongest ally. With their brother in tow, they return home only to battle the Comanches with the Texas Rangers. The book also strongly portrays the lives of the women left at home. —TED GACSI

DOUBLE EAGLES

ANDREW J FENADY, LEISURE BOOKS, $5.50, SOFTCOVER.



Here's a handful of high-seas swashbuckling and dry-land action with dishonored ex-Navy Capt. Thomas Gunnison, who learns the country needs him after all. When the Civil War starts, the Union asks him to sail 1,000 rifles and $15,000,000 in gold double eagles from California, down around the Horn, and up to Baltimore. While en route, Gunnison is forced to land in Mexico and transport his valuable cargo overland to the sea at Vera Cruz. Bandits and greedy companions threaten the outcome of this desperate mission. A satisfying variation of a familiar theme in an unfamiliar locale. —CHUCK LEWIS

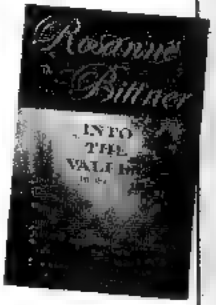
FIRE IN THE RAINBOW

STEPHEN OVERHOLSER, FIVE STAR, $25.95, HARDCOVER.

Like a tumbleweed blown along by fate, young Cale Parker lands at Red Rock, Colorado, and is soon appointed deputy sheriff. While riding his rounds, he meets vibrant, teenaged Edna Pauls of the vast Rainbow Ranch and becomes lovesick, which leads him down as many blind trails as those left by the unknown rustlers he pursues. Pistol whipped, battered by hardcases and betrayed by the one man who made him a law officer, Cale wrestles with his personal demons to triumph in a story glowing with all the wild fire of the Old West. —BILL GARWOOD

INTO THE VALLEY: THE SETTLERS

ROSANNE BITTNER, FORGE BOOKS, $24.95, HARDCOVER.



This book is simply a Harlequin Romance in buckskin. Corny, unrealistic dialogue, superficial characters and a predictable story that's been done to death relegates the book to the soap opera level. That would be forgivable if it wasn't for the continual historical inaccuracies that completely destroy the credibility of this author's reputation. —CHUCK LEWIS

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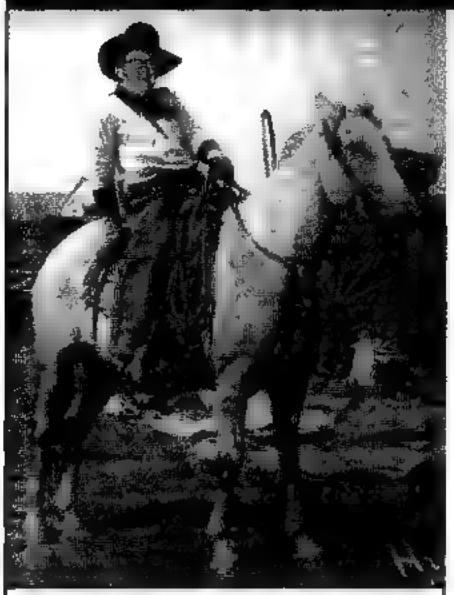

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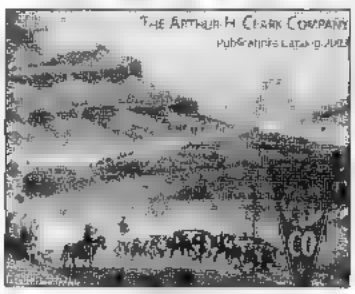

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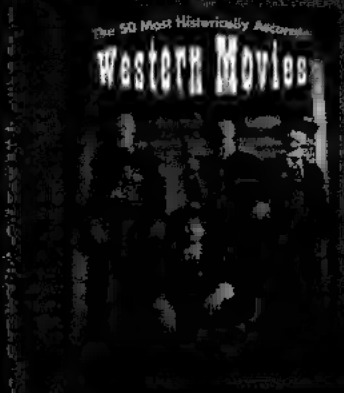

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- **Classic Gunfights:** Youngers vs. Pinkertons.
- **Second Annual Holiday Gift Giver's Guide.**
- **Travel—Renegade Roads:** Route 66—Tulsa, Oklahoma to Los Angeles, California.
- **Travel—Day Trip:** Tombstone, Arizona.

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GUNS AND MASSACRES
- **Features:** Six-guns of the good, the bad and the dangerous; Sand Creek Indian massacre; Old West theaters.
- **Classic Gunfights:** Remembering the Alamo.
- **Women of the West:** Narcissa Whitman.
- **Travel—Renegade Roads:** Following the Rio Grande—Colorado, New Mexico and Texas.

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COLLECTING THE WEST
- **Features:** Collecting Old West photographs; movie collecting on a budget; firefighters of the Old West.
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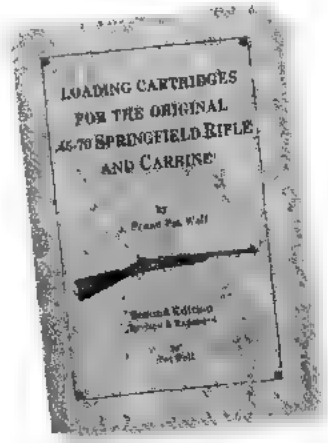

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BY CORINNE BROWN

Gettin' Off that LA Freeway

Jerry Jeff Walker's music kicks like a dry martini.

Who'd have ever believed that Austin's beloved redneck-country-rock king Jerry Jeff Walker was an avid jazz buff?

Anyone who listens to his latest CD, that's who.

Recorded "just because he could," this counter-culture voice of the 1970s and beyond croons gracefully to the tunes of Gershwin, Rodgers and Hart and other composers from the '50s. His cool but compelling renditions of *My Funny Valentine* and *That Old Feeling* rival those of the icons who first recorded them.

"I promised myself one day I would sing this material," Walker explains. "When I had the chance to put together two of the greatest guitar players in the country [Tommy Nash and Mitch Watkins] and pair them up with the finest bass and percussion I could find, I knew I was ready to try these, my way."

Walker's discography reads like the history of American music. Having over a dozen albums on his own label (Tried and True), he's a man who responds to the times, and his music is as diverse as his life, fertilized by influences such as Chet Baker, Bob Dylan, Jimmy Rogers and Woody Guthrie. A move to the Austin music scene in 1971 plunged the laid-back New York balladeer into a vibrant world that added funk to his sound. From Kerrville to Luckenbach, he gave his Texas fans the sounds they craved.

Jerry Jeff Walker: Famously known for his song "Mr. Bojangles," his new sound dances with jazzy flair.

– COURTESY JERRY JEFF WALKER –

"In truth, I've done it all," quips Walker. "But the jazz CD [*Jerry Jeff Jazz*] released in 2003 was an inevitability: a connecting point. Remember back in the '50s, when we didn't have our own record players? We had to use our parents'. We didn't have our own music yet, either—the jazz greats were a part of those beginnings."

Walker wanted to recapture the authentic sound of those early recordings, without the effects of high-tech tweaking. "We created the same ambiance by recording on sound equipment from the era and staying away from reverbs and amplifiers. I took on 14 familiar songs and sang them straight-up, relaxed and easy. And for a change, all I had to do was sing."

For anyone who doubts the effect, one listen reveals a dry martini of a CD, with that inevitable Jerry Jeff sparkle.

At 61, Walker continues cutting albums and giving live performances like his annual birthday concert in Austin. "I usually add a guest artist, someone the audience knows and loves," he tells *True West*. "This year I brought my jazz musicians and did cuts from the new release. It was a hit."

For some real nostalgia, check out his book *Jerry Jeff Walker: Gypsy Songman*. An accompanying CD, *A Life in Song*, brings you the sound, too.

As diverse as Walker's fans are today, one common thread binds them—their respect for a man who did it his own way. Jerry likes to think of himself as a fierce independent as well, both in the music business and out.

"I suppose I haven't fully capitalized on what I do or who I am," Walker admits. "But becoming a bigger star was never of interest. After all, I've played Carnegie Hall, the White House and *The Tonight Show*. I'm satisfied. Thinking back, I enjoyed being who I was, singing straight acoustic, folk or pop. And I love what I'm doing now."

So do we.

Corinne Brown is a native Coloradan, Western author, staff writer for *Persimmon Hill* and fashion writer for *Western & English Today* and *True West*.

"All music is folk music. I ain't never heard no horse sing a song."

- Louis Armstrong

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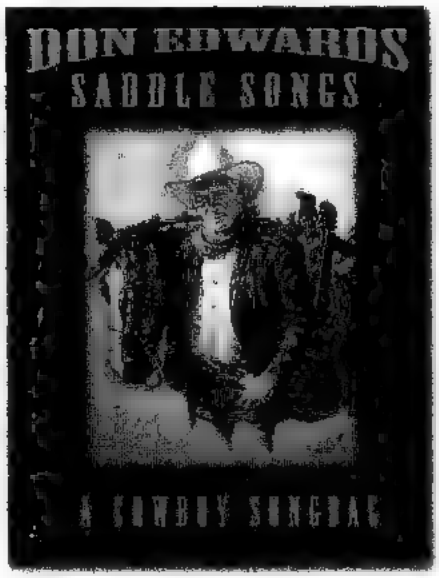

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NEVER GONNA LET YOU GO

Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart

GEARLE RECORDS, 2003

What you get here is a two-cd set: one is the polished finished product and the other is an acoustic pre-production "in the ruff" version of the same songs. Both offer some off-beat accompaniment that is rhythmic, percussive and, at times, very minimal—the ruff cuts sport a trebly sound. Earle's fragile Nanci Griffith-like vocals complement Stuart's gritty tenor, especially on the lively "If You Want My Love" and "Never Gonna Let You Go." —GUS WALKER

HIGH LONESOME COWBOY

Don Edwards & Peter Rowan

WESTERN JUBILEE RECORDING, 2002

This CD makes music history as award-winning music historian/balladeer Don Edwards and bluegrass artist Peter Rowan create an authentic sound that evokes 19th-century America. If cowboy music has been said to be plaintive, sweet and endearing, these renditions of favorite classics like "The Old Chisholm Trail" and "Take Me Back to the Range" verify the maxim. Creative interpretation of these favorites is largely due to crisp accompaniment by Edwards on guitar and Tony Rice, Norman & Nancy Blake, and Billy & Brynn Bright on banjo, guitar, bass and mandolin. I dare you to pick a favorite cut. My guess? You'll be playing it over and over again. —CORINNE BROWN

DEVIL IN THE BARN

Kaz Murphy

BARN WALL RECORDS, 2003.

Kaz Murphy's offbeat country style originates from an eclectic musical background of Philadelphia folk, Seattle rock and cultural experiences in Asia and Italy. Starting with the first song "Dirty Ol' Town," Kaz hooks you into his unique and forthright vocals with the help of some wonderful whining pedal steel guitar. Check out Kaz's rendition of Jimi Hendrix's "Castles Made of Sand"—it's just another one of the many highlights on this terrific CD. —LARRY JOHNS

RUN THAT BY ME ONE MORE TIME

Willie Nelson & Ray Price

LOST HIGHWAY, 2003.

Willie Nelson and Ray Price have drifted in and out of each other's lives several times since Willie played bass in Ray's band, The Cherokee Cowboys. Ray later recorded Willie's "Nightlife" in 1961. The duo's biggest falling-out came when Willie killed Ray's prized fighting rooster after it hunted a couple of Willie's wife's laying hens. *Run That By Me* presents 11 newly recorded interpretations of songs from Willie and Ray's careers. Ray's country crooning plays well off of Willie's vocal rasp. Willie's guitar solos also add flavor to the distinctive fiddle stylings of Ray's band. —GUS WALKER

SEPIA SOUL

Jon Chandler

WRITER'S RANCH RECORDS, 2003.

Colorado composer Jon Chandler rounds up 10 of the strongest, original cuts from three previously released albums, plus six new recordings, to create the extraordinary mix on *Sepia Soul*. His contemporary songs of the West are written with passion and grace in the cowboy tradition: stories well-told and legends brought to life show a deep respect for the land and the hearts that broke settling it. Accompanied by world-class backup on drums, fiddle and guitar, Chandler delivers full-bodied sound and spine-tingling lyrics about love, hate, revenge and forgiveness. Definitely his best album to date. —CORINNE BROWN

FINDING OUR WAY

The Mickeys

RIVERBEAT MUSIC, 2003

Identical 24-year-old twin sisters Amy and Julie Mickey have released an impressive debut album. The sisters' diversity of country, bluegrass and celtic-styled songs, combined with impeccable musicianship and bright colorful vocals and harmonies, result in a near perfect collection. Interestingly, it's in the songs—"Dixie Wire" and "My Train"—where they show more vulnerability that the sisters' strengths and appeal are most evident. The CD leaves little doubt that these talented twins are finding their way to a successful musical career. —LARRY JOHNS

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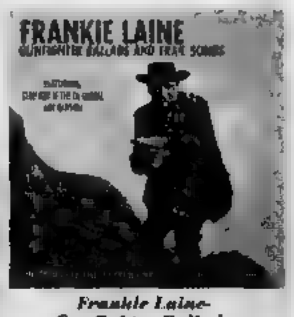

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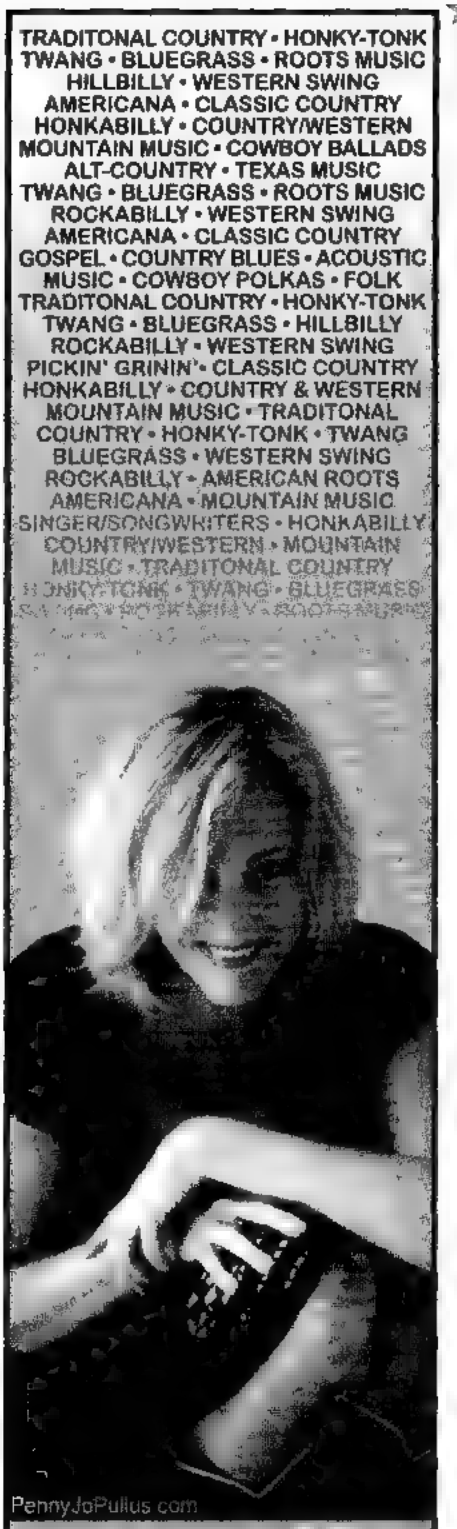
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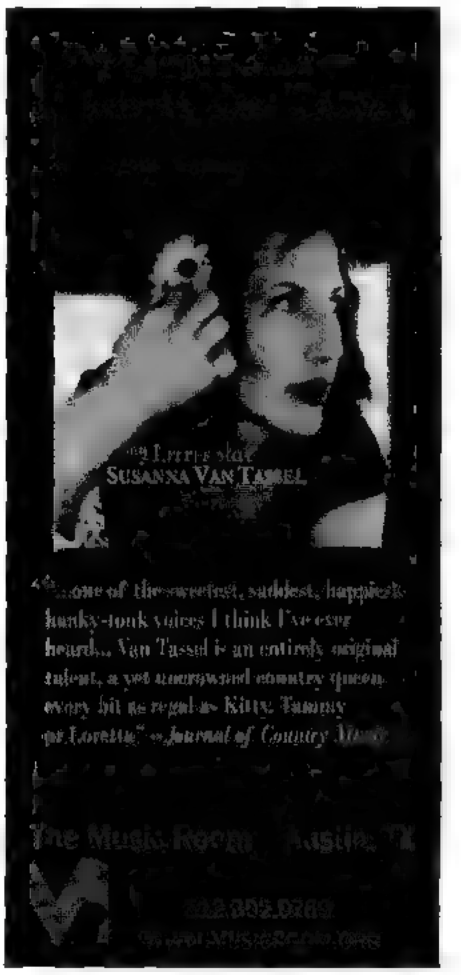
Mass Graves

As detailed by *True West* in May/June 2003 ("If they're hungry, let them eat grass"), 38 Sioux were hanged after the 1862 Great Sioux Uprising in Mankato, Minnesota, that left more than 500 civilians and soldiers dead.

According to a new book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Native American History* by Walter C. Fleming, hanging didn't end the saga:

"The bodies of the executed Santee Sioux were buried in a mass grave, but they didn't rest long," Fleming reports. "The bodies were dug up by a number of doctors who wanted the skeletons for office reference, as medical books were few and expensive. One of the doctors was Wilham W. Mayo, who taught his sons, William and Charles, anatomy using one of the Mankato skeletons. The Mayos, father and sons, went on to establish the now world-famous Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnestota."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Finest

In Each Issue We Profile Some Of The Finest Purveyors Of The Old West.

Flat Creek Saddle Shop

Although the Flat Creek Saddle Shop has saddles galore, supermodel Christie Brinkley came here for some hot-looking chaps.

– Courtesy Flat Creek Saddle Shop –

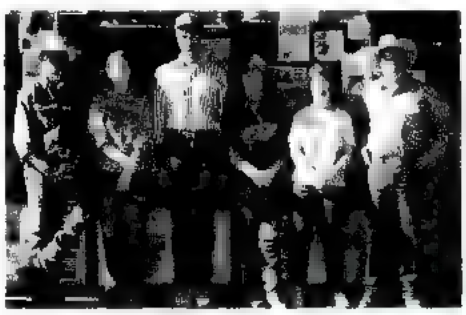
Scott Carter may have the best job in the world. He once measured supermodel Christie Brinkley for chaps. We can excuse Scott for not remembering whether she ordered the shotgun or batwing style.

Scott and his partner John Bauer own the Flat Creek Saddle Shop in Jackson, Wyoming, where you can purchase just about anything you need for riding a horse.

Scott got his start after high school—he had grown up on a ranch in Southeastern Montana—when he apprenticed with a saddle maker for several years in Miles City, Montana. In 1982, he launched a saddle and tack repair, and manufacturing business in a 250-square-foot shop in the shadow of the Grand Teton Mountains. John Bauer came aboard about nine years later, and now the two partners own one of the largest saddle stores (including mail order) in the country.

This year, Scott estimates they'll sell over 1,000 saddles in addition to chaps, bits, spurs, saddle blankets, raincoats and other gear. Around 1997, the demand for saddles became so large, Scott, John and their employees quit making them in-house, and instead they concentrated Flat Creek Saddle Shop's internal manufacturing resources on chaps, pack saddles, headstalls, reins and other strap goods.

Scott and John count among their customers a number of the rich and famous from Hollywood—including Harrison Ford, for whom they once made a saddle—and from government. They also supply the tack for Marlboro cigarette commercials, which are still shown outside of the U.S. Now if we could just get them to introduce us to Christie.

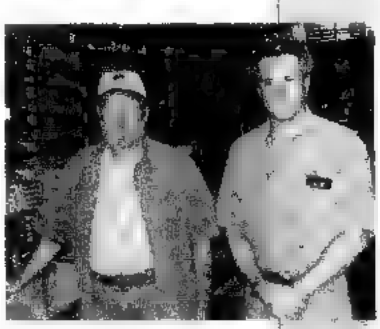


John Bauer (center) and Scott Carter (far right) own one of the largest saddle stores in America.

– Courtesy Flat Creek Saddle Shop –

Legendary Guns

When we were working on our story "50 Guns that Won the West," we searched high and low trying to find a picture of every firearm featured in the article. As our deadline approached, we had all the images we needed but one—the circa-1880s "Zulu" single barrel shotgun. Then we phoned Dave LaRue and Joe Forbregd, owners of Legendary Guns in Phoenix, Arizona, and learned why their store is indeed "legendary." Dave and Joe not only had the gun in stock, they snapped a digital photo of it and sent it to us in time to be included in the issue (p. 38, Feb/March 2003).



Dave LaRue (left) and Joe Forbregd (right) have a shop in Phoenix, Arizona, that's a hot spot for gun aficionados.

– Courtesy Legendary Guns –

Between them, Dave and Joe have over 80 years of firearm experience. Their store carries new, used and antique handguns, rifles and shotguns, not to mention gun leather, blades and shooting accessories. Legendary Guns also buys and sells gun and blade collections, specializing in weapons from the American frontier, Civil War, Spanish American War, WW I and II and the present.

Serious and novice gun collectors feel right at home at Legendary Guns, where they can find new, used and antique firearms and blades.

Courtesy Legendary Guns –

Cowboy action shooters and cowboy mounted action shooters will find a complete department dedicated to their needs. And in many ways, Legendary Guns is like Grafton's—you remember, the general store where Jack Palance and the other gunslingers hung out in the movie *Shane*. Stroll through Legendary Guns and you could cross trails with top SASS and CMSA shooters, such as Rattler John, Toots Sweet, Annie Bianco Ellett or *True West* publisher Dave Daiss. Just don't challenge any of them to slap leather.

— R.G. Robertson

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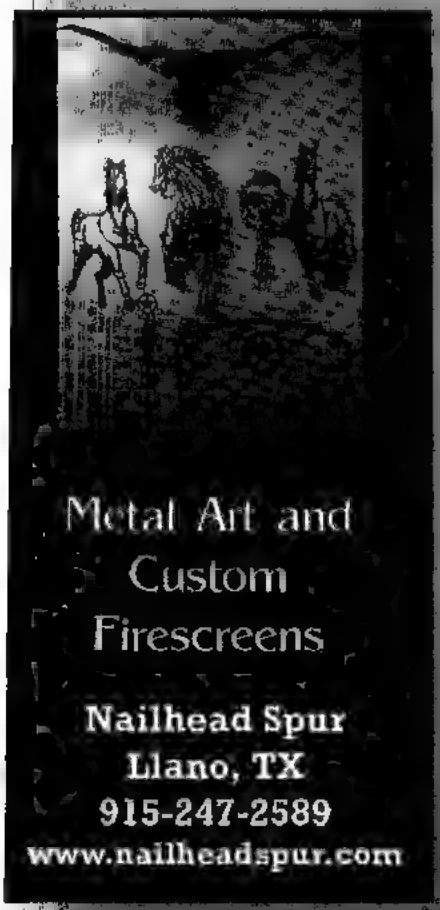

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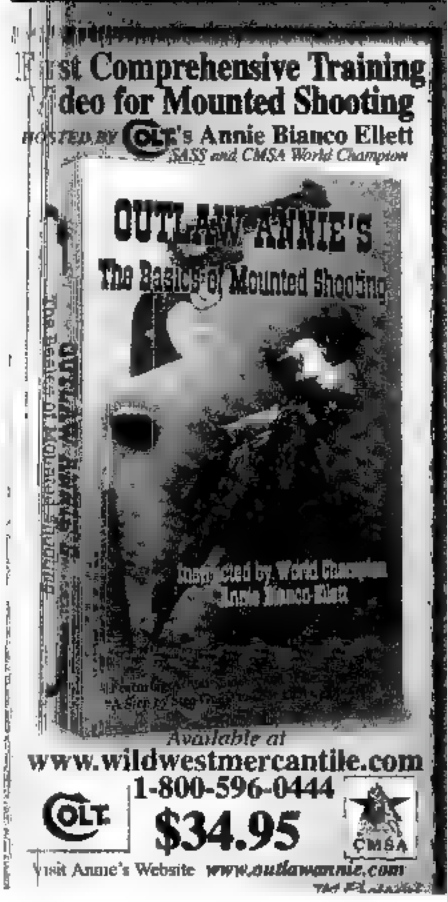

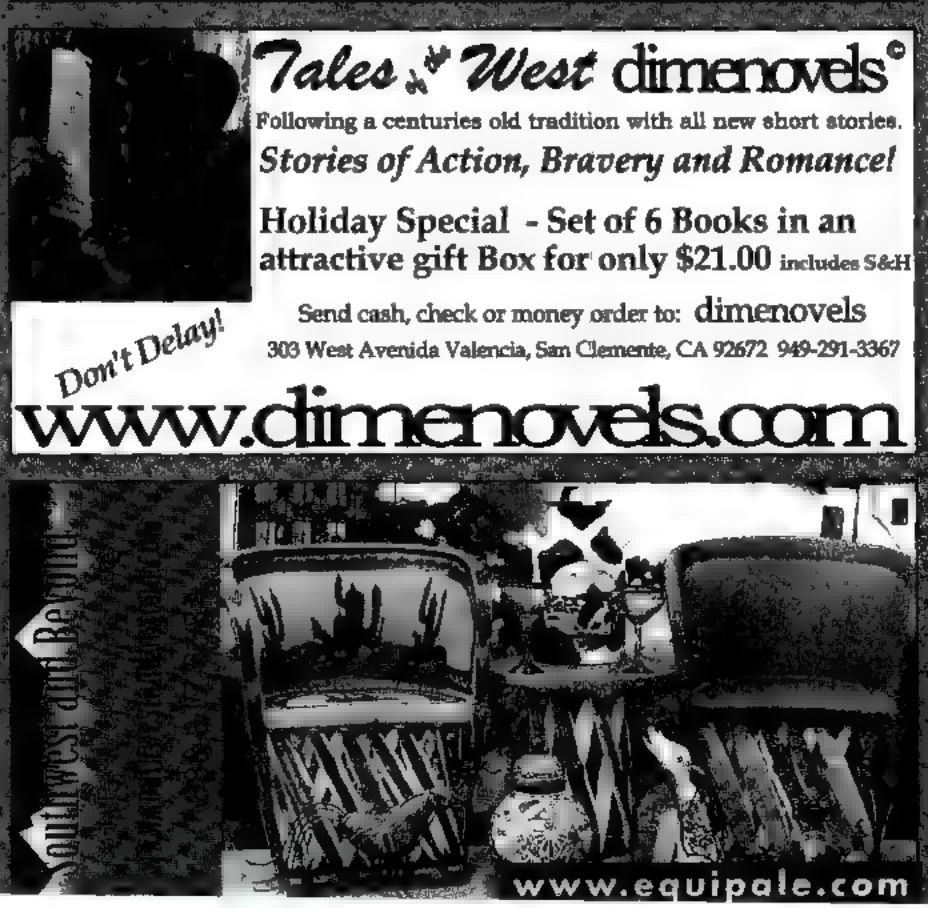
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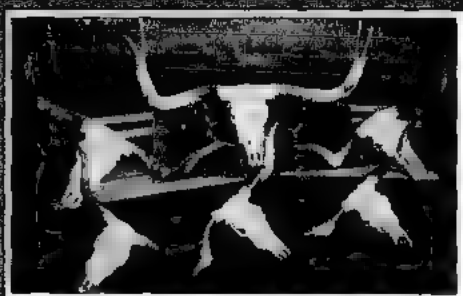

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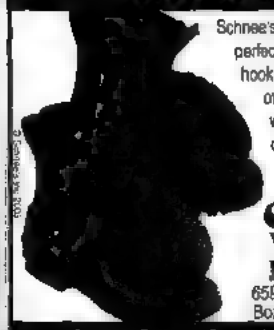

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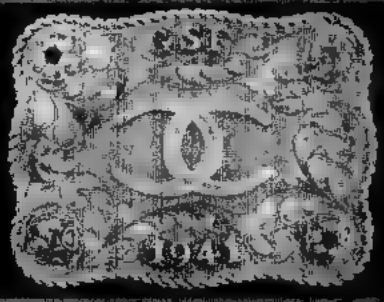

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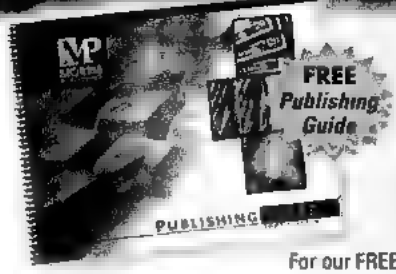

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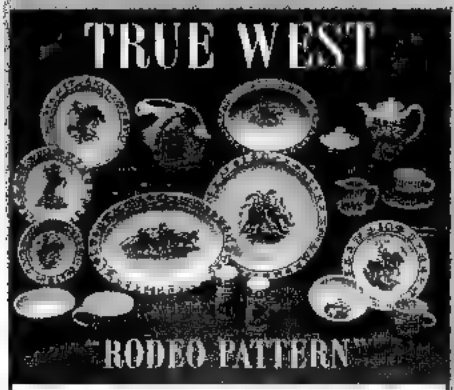

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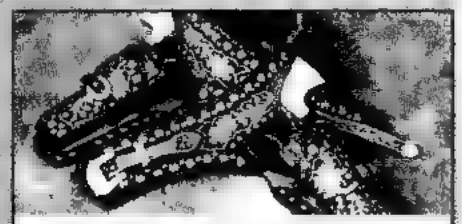

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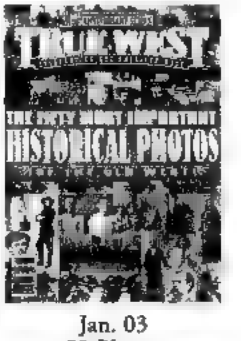

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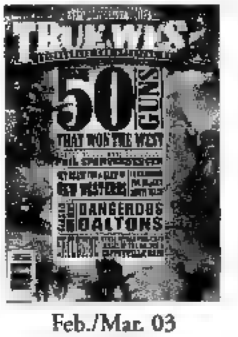
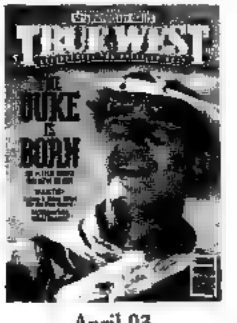
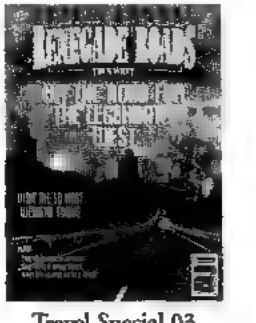


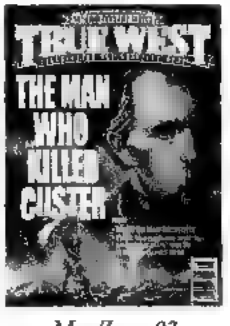
Feb./Mar. 03
50 Guns



April 03
John Wayne

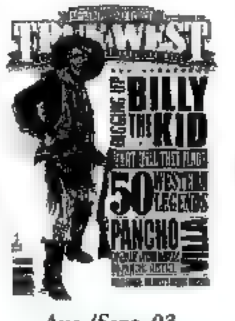


Travel Special 03
Renegade Roads



May/June 03
Man Who Shot Custer

July 03
Doc & Wyatt



Aug./Sept. 03
Billy & Pancho

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Ollie L. "Brushy Bill" Roberts, who died in 1950, claimed he was Billy the Kid. In your opinion, what are the chances that a DNA investigation backed by New Mexico will prove Roberts was the legendary outlaw?

Phil Holabach
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

I'm the kind of guy who likes to think Butch and Sundance didn't die in that gunfight in Bolivia, Jesse James wasn't shot by "that dirty little coward" and Billy the Kid didn't die in the Maxwell house at the hands of Pat Garrett.

See True West's Aug/Sept 2003 issue for an explanation of the Digging Up Billy investigation.

I think that after the investigation is completed, there are still going to be those who believe Billy Bonney was killed July 14, 1881, by Pat Garrett, while others will insist Brushy Bill was the real McCoy.

I believe the chances aren't too good that the DNA will link Mrs. Antrim and Roberts, but I think it's great they're investigating it because it keeps Old West history alive.

I recently heard the strange story of a woman who disguised herself as a man and drove a stagecoach. Were there other bizarre tales of women in the West?

Susan Pitchford
Boise, Idaho

Lots of them. You must be thinking of Charlotte "Charley" Darkey Parkhurst. Charley passed herself off as a man for years and fooled everybody, right up until her autopsy.

In 1902, an outlaw named Tom King was killed during a holdup near Tombstone, Arizona. When his body was being prepared for burial, it was discovered that Tom King was actually

Charley Parkhurst dressed as a man and drove a stage between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, California. Her disguise enabled her to become the first woman voter in the state—43 years before the Golden State granted women suffrage.

– True West Archives –

a "queen." The dead outlaw was a woman named Flora Quick, a.k.a. Flora Mundis or Chinese Dot. Quick had fled an unhappy marriage and formed an outlaw gang that headquartered in the mountains near Clifton, Arizona.

I'm a big fan of the great Western film *Tombstone*. I'd like to write to Wyatt Earp III, who played Billy Claiborne in the movie. Could you possibly provide an address for him?

Ken Haney
Jackson, Tennessee

The Screen Actors Guild is usually very helpful with such requests. The guild will not release an actor's address or phone number, but it will give out a P.O. box or agent contact. Contact SAG: 3601 W. Olive #200, Burbank, CA 91505-4697 or call 818-954-9400.

Do you know if Doc Holliday's guns were saved and if they are on display anywhere?

Mike Storey
Via the Internet

I spoke with Casey Tefertiller, who in turn contacted Doc Holliday expert Gary Roberts, and both say there are no guns that can be positively identified as having belonged to Holliday

The Autry Museum claims to have Holliday's .45 caliber Colt Single Action Army, but its provenance is questionable: a letter states that Doc Holliday's nephew was given the gun while visiting Holliday at his deathbed. However, no relatives are known to have visited Holliday at tha time, Roberts says.

I've heard that outlaws on horseback were still robbing trains well into the 20th century Is that true?

George Davies
Phoenix, Arizona

Not only were outlaws still robbing trains, but latter-day train robbers were also bent on outdoing earlier gangs like the James-Younger's and Dalton's.

In 1923, the Al Spenser Gang was planning a train robbery in Oklahoma Spenser wanted an audience to witness his caper so he sent notice ahead of time, stating when and where the robbery would take place.

Sure enough, a large group of people showed up and ate picnic lunches on a hillside next to the tracks.

Unfortunately, local lawmen didn't take Spenser's bravado seriously. They arrived on the scene after the robbery and all they found was the garbage left by the spectators.

Al Spenser, after he was shot and killed by Oklahoma lawmen in 1923.

– True West Archives –

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I've been reading *The Authentic Wild West: The Gunfighters* by James D. Horan. In the book, he mentions Jim Curry. Do you know who he was?

Jared Campbell
Blairsville, Pennsylvania

Jim Curry, an Irishman, arrived in Hays City, Kansas, in the late 1860s when the town was brand new. Army scouts claimed Curry was a scout for Maj. James Forsyth at the Battle of Beecher's Island in September 1868. He was wounded during a fight between black soldiers and Hays City citizens.

Curry also allegedly put a pistol to the back of Wild Bill Hickok's head, while the lawman was playing cards in Uncle Tommy Drum's Saloon, and threatened to kill him. Cooler heads prevailed and Curry didn't shoot. He then faded from history, but it's a safe bet he came to a bad ending.

Can you tell me anything about William "Kid" Thompson?

Ron Mance
Cicero, Illinois

Could you mean Billy Thompson, the older brother of Ben? Known as "Texas Billy," this Thompson brother was born in England and taken to Austin as a youngster. Mexicans killed him in the early 1890s during a gunfight near the Mexican border.

Billy Thompson earned his reputation as a dangerous gunman.

– TRUE WEST ARCHIVES –

Marshall Trimble is Arizona's official historian. His books include *The Arizona Trilogy* and *Law of the Gun*. **If you have a question, write:** Ask the Marshall, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327

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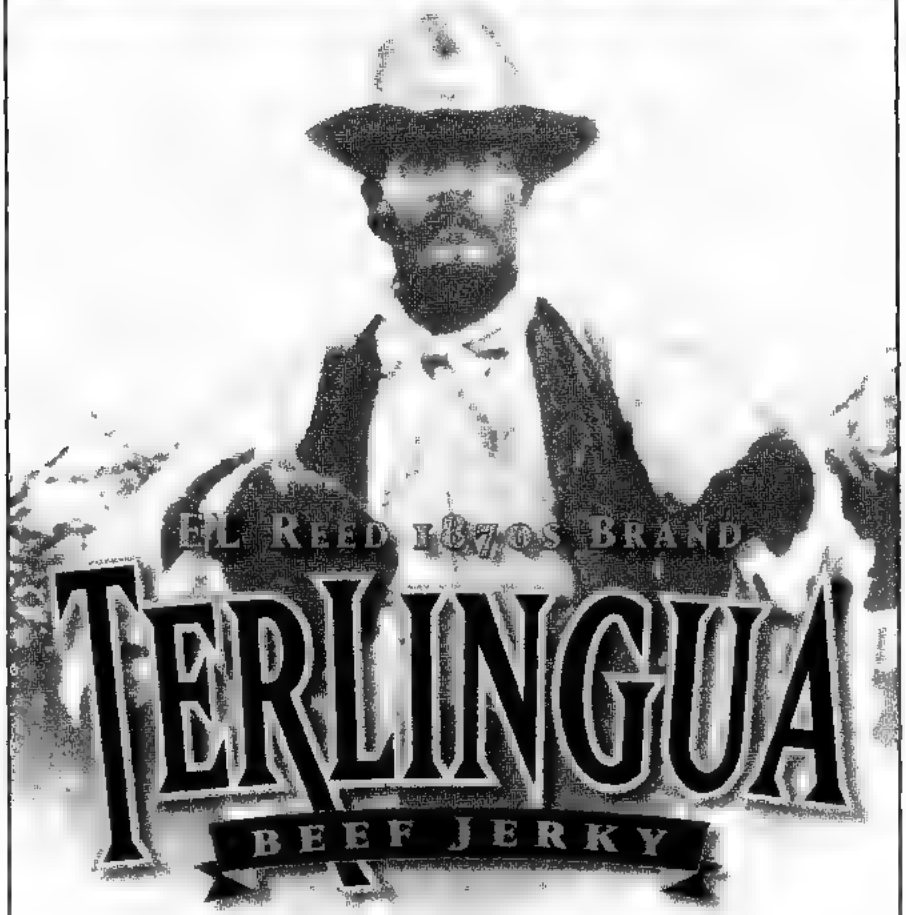

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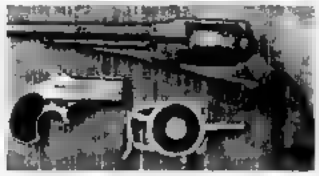

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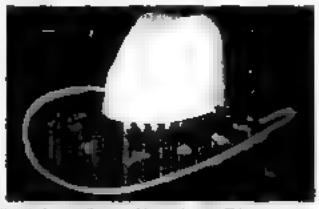

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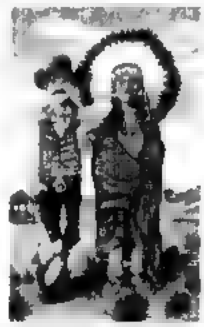

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Advertiser Index

Advertiser	Page #
1880's Western Wear	90
A-1 Beer Prints	13
Allard Auctions	122
America Remembers	9
American West Steamboat Co	107
American West, The	15
Appaloosa Trading Co	104
Arthur Clark Co	114
Austin Hall Boot Co	125
Barn Wall Records	119
Big Bender Records	129
Big Nose Kates Saloon	33
Bird Cage Theatre/Boothill	Inside Back Cover
Bison LLC	130
Bison Ranch	4
Blair Hotels	106
Blevins Mfg. Co	40
Bloodshot Records	119
Blucher Boot Co.	126
Bridger Press	115
Buck Cassidy	127
Buckles, Etc.	127
Buffalo Bill Historical Center	103
Buffalo Chip Saloon	45
CM Russell Auction	39
C-Sharps Arms	68-69
Carefree Resort & Villas	94
Casa de Patron	109
Catalena Hatters	38
Cave Creek Guitar Shop	129
Caverns, The	109
Chisholm Trail Heritage Center	100
Cimarron F.A. Co.	45
Circle KB Leatherworks	127
Collector's Armoury	49
Colonel Carter's Mercantile	128
Colt's Manufacturing	18
Coltsfoot, Inc	126
Concept Productions	119
Connor Hotel of Jerome	108
Cow Patty's	127
Cowboy Corral	128
Crawford & Co	128
Cripple Creek Hat Co	123
Crystal Palace Saloon	107
Curly Bills B&B	20
Custer Battlefield Museum	43
Dan Deuter	49
Dave Ellis Canvas Products	124
Dennis A Yoder	124
Desert Caballeros Western Museum	44
Diamond D Ranch	108
Dickinson Cattle Co	124,128
Dickinson Historical Society	102
Dillon Precision	126
Dimenovels	123
Dixie Gun Works	20
Dodge National Circut Rodeo	79
Don Edwards	117
Double D Western World	90
Double E Guest Ranch	106
Dumont Books and Magazines	115
Durango & Silverton Railroad	40
Early West, The	1
Elkhorn Ranch	106
Flat Creek Saddle Shop	130
Flying W Guest Ranch	106
Fort Laramie Historical Association	107
Fort Larned Old Guard	48
Four Corners Gallery	126
Frontier Trophy Buckles	38
Gadsden Hotel	40
George Boutwell	125
Goring CVB	44
Goldfield Ghost Town	109
Good Time Stove Co	128
Grand Encampment Museum	102
Great American Wild West Show	109
Guns of the Pioneers	127
Harvest Fair	7
Hassayampa Inn	107
Hays, Kansas CVB	103
Heber City Poetry Gathering	100
Henry Repeating Arms Co	3
Hergert Clothing Co	91
Irma Hotel, The	57
Jaxonbuilt Hat Co	122
Jesse James Farm & Museum	107
John Beckett Photography	45
Kansas State Historical Society	109
Kings Gun Works	126
Kirk Ratajesak	124
Land of the Dawn	130
Larian Hotel, The	95
Larned Tourism	48
Las Vegas Museum	108
Legendary Guns	130
Lincoln Co Overland Stage	108
Linkhorn Records	120
Little Johns Auction Service	54
Log Cabin B&B	108
Louis L'Amour Trading Post, The	125
Maynard Buckles	122
Michael Garman Galleries	21
Mickeys, The	129
Mojave Drums	109
Montana Ranch, The	Back Cover
Montana Watch Co	99
Monterey Cowboy Poetry & Music	25
Morris Publishing	128
Music Room, The	120
Nailhead Spur Co	123
Nat'l Cowboy Western Museum	32
National Ranching Heritage Center	31
New Mexico Pinon Coffee	53
No Bull Songs	129
North Platte CVB	102
Northfield Historical Society	107
OK Corral	2
Old Coal Mine Museum	108
Old Time Antique Pocket Watches	127
Oldwest Signs	124
Optimo Hat Works	90
Out West Saddlery	126
Outlaw Annie Productions	123
Palo Duro Records	117
Park County Travel Council	53
Parelli Natural Horsemanship	Inside Front Cover
Paul Dietz Horsemanship	73
Pleasant Valley Shop	130
R&D Gunshop	48
Recollections	39
Rex Allen Museum	106
Richard Jensen	129
Rim County Regional C of C	104
Ross Taylor Originals	95
Ruidoso CVB	34
Ruidoso Store, The	130
Ruxtons Trading Post	124
Sacramento CVB	5
Sam Weller's Zion Books	114
Santos Furniture	122
SASS	57
Sawtooth Saddle Co	44
Scenic Mesa Ranch	49
Schnee's Boots & Shoes	125
Scotts Bluff County Tourism	43
Silver Sage Designs	122
Sloan Brands	124
Sonja Haynie Jewelery	126
Southwest and Beyond	123
Spur Cross Stables	53
St. James Hotel	106
Strickly Southwestern	91
Sturm, Ruger & Co	11
Terlingua Beef Jerky	133
Teton Wagon Train	108
Texas Jacks	125
Texas Rangers Hall of Fame	33
Texas True	125
Thompson/Center Arms	20
Tom Hirt	123
Tombstone Western Music Festival	48
Too Many Dogs Music	119
Tor/Forge Books	111
True West Dinnerware	130
Turquoise Trader	122
Twang Cast	120
Wall Drug	57
Wells Fargo	32
Wild West Mercantile	91
WM Brown Holster Co	44
Wolf's Western Traders	115
WS Land & Cattle Co	95
WY Mercantile—The Book Ranch	125
Y.O. Ranch	26

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True West Sports Quiz
By Jack Connelly

(Answers below)

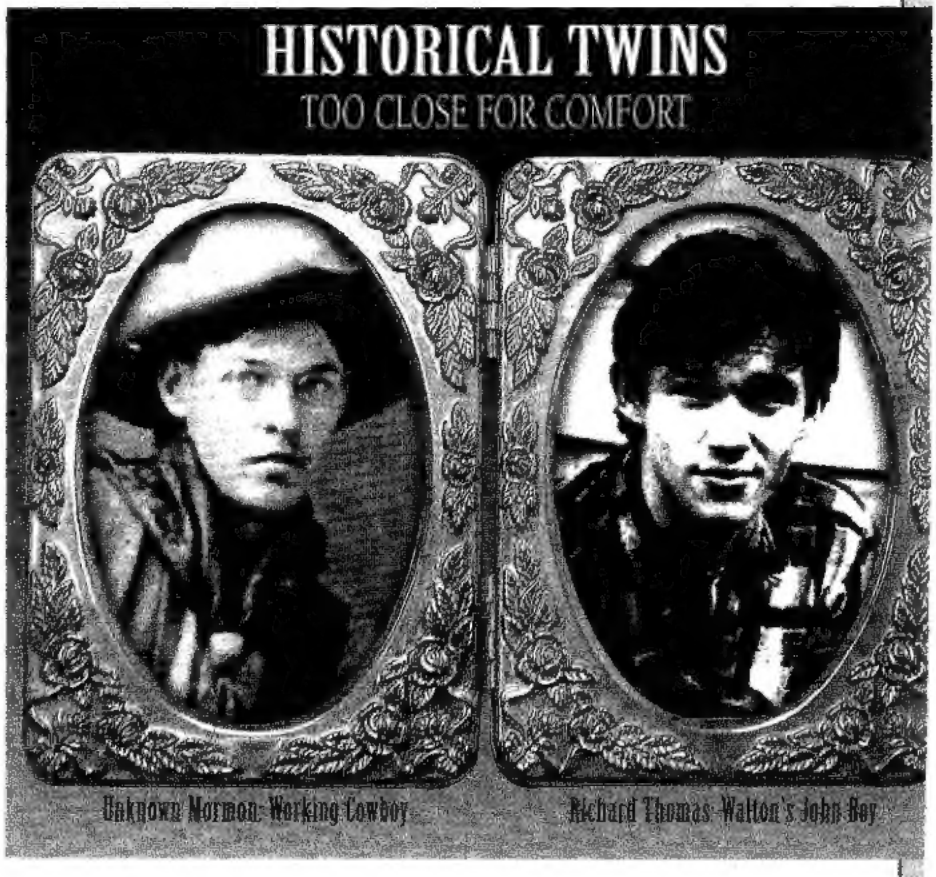
1. These boats were used by Lewis & Clark, and nowadays you can find two of them in any professional baseball park.

2. The nickname of Baltimore Colt's great runner Alan Ameche and the animal Spaniards introduced to the Indians.

3. What defunct Athlete of the Year award borrowed its name from a Western icon?

4. What nickname was shared by pitchers Bob Feller and Bob Turley?

1. Dugouts 2. Horse
3. Hickok Belt 4. Bullet Bob



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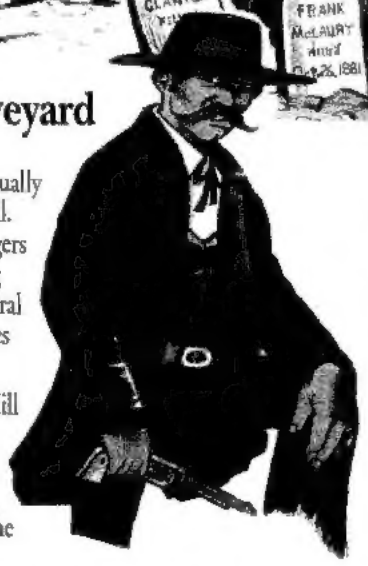

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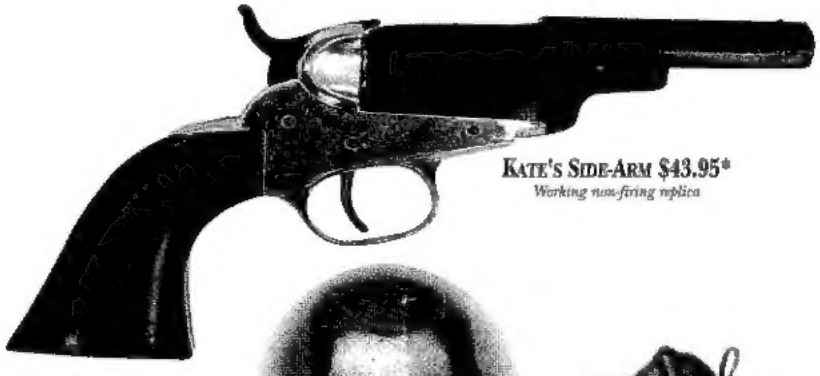

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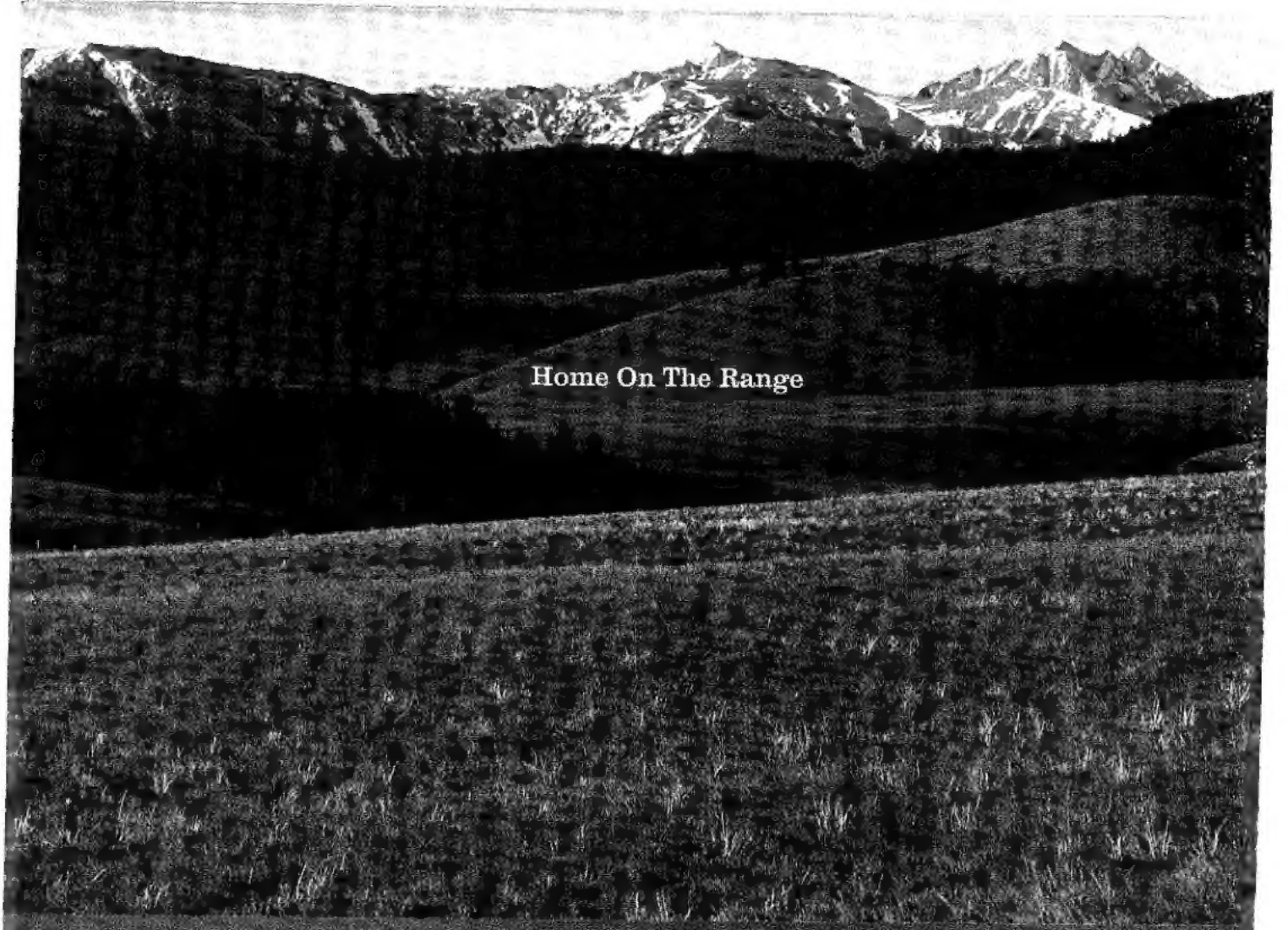

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